ABSTRACT

PARKER, ALISON E. Parental Socialization of Positive and Negative Emotions: Associations with Children’s Everyday Coping and Display Rule Knowledge. (Under the direction of Amy G. Halberstadt).

This study investigated relationships among parents’ self-reported emotion-related beliefs and behaviors, children’s display rule knowledge for positive and negative emotions, and children’s coping with everyday peer stressors. One hundred and thirteen 6th graders and their parents were recruited from middle schools to participate. Children were interviewed about their display rule knowledge for various emotions, as well as their coping with peer stressors. Parents completed self-report questionnaires regarding their beliefs about emotion, their reactions to children’s positive and negative emotions, and their emotion expressiveness in the family. Relationships among parents’ beliefs, reactions, and emotion expressivity were found. Specifically, parents’ beliefs that positive emotions are good predicted parents’ positive expressiveness and beliefs that positive emotions are dangerous predicted parents’ controlling of children’s positive emotions. Parents’ beliefs that negative emotions are good did not predict parents’ negative expressiveness; however, these beliefs did predict parents’ encouragement of children’s negative emotions. Parental guidance beliefs were also related to their emotion expressiveness. Parents’ belief that it is the parents’ job to teach children about emotions was positively related to their own positive emotion expressiveness, whereas parents’ belief that children should learn on their own was related to their own negative emotion expressiveness. Additionally, relationships were established between parents’ self-reported beliefs and behaviors, parent education, child gender, and their children’s reports of coping with everyday peer stress. Child gender and education explained some of the
variance in children’s coping. Parents’ beliefs about the value and guidance of emotions, negative emotion expressiveness, and reactions to children’s displays of positive emotions predicted children’s use of coping strategies. Lastly, gender moderated the relationships between parents’ punishing reactions to children’s negative emotions and children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions, and between parents’ teaching/controlling reactions to children’s positive emotions and children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions. Parents’ controlling and punishing reactions were associated with better display rule knowledge for boys, but not for girls. Implications for parental socialization of emotion and its impact on children’s social competence in peer-related settings are discussed, as well as ideas for future research.
PARENTAL SOCIALIZATION OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EMOTIONS: ASSOCIATIONS WITH CHILDREN’S EVERYDAY COPING AND DISPLAY

RULE KNOWLEDGE

by

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Parents play a pivotal role in children’s emotional experience and expression. Parents’ behaviors and beliefs regarding emotion have been associated with children’s emotion knowledge (e.g., Denham & Kochanoff, 2002); expressivity (e.g., Halberstadt, Crisp & Eaton, 1999); knowledge of display rules (e.g., Jones, Abbey, & Cumberland, 1998); social competence (e.g., Garner & Estep, 2001) and regulation of emotion (e.g., McDowell, Kim, O’Neil & Parke, 2002). However, how parents teach their children about positive emotions and how this influences children’s socio-emotional competence and coping in the peer world has not been widely studied.

This study explored the pathways through which parental socialization of both positive and negative emotions relates to children’s everyday peer coping and display rule knowledge. The focus on positive emotion in this research helps to balance an area overpopulated by negative emotions. Whereas some researchers argue that parental reactions to children’s negative emotions provide rich opportunities for emotion socialization, and rightly so (e.g. Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinrad, 1998), I argue that parental reactions to children’s experience and expression of positive emotions are also important in teaching children about emotions and developing children’s repertoire of social skills.

As children get older, peer relationships become increasingly important and require certain skills to foster these relationships. Given the importance of forming friendships in middle childhood, children must develop skills to cope with everyday peer stressors that may arise. There are a variety of stressful situations that children may encounter, such as teasing, rejection, and physical and relational aggression. The current study investigated the types of peer stressors that children experience and their reports of how they cope
with them. Children’s knowledge of display rules is also an important skill in maintaining positive peer relations (Jones et al., 1998). Children’s knowledge for replacing a felt emotion, when it is appropriate to do so, with the display of a socially appropriate emotion and the motivation for doing so was examined in this study. Of interest to the current study was how parental socialization of positive and negative emotion prepares children for interactions in the peer world. To explore this, parents in the current study were asked to report their beliefs about children’s emotions, their positive and negative emotion expressiveness in the family, as well as their reactions to children’s display of positive and negative emotions.

In the next section, I will discuss the importance of positive emotions. In the following sections, I will explore the role of parents’ beliefs, reactions to children’s emotions and emotion expressiveness in the family in children’s socio-emotional competence and everyday coping. Following these sections, I will discuss children’s stress and coping, followed by children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning. Lastly, I will outline the aims and hypotheses for the study.

What Are Positive Emotions and Why Are They Important?

We have all experienced positive emotions (e.g. joy, pride, excitement, contentment, gratitude, love, etc.). We have felt joy and happiness when reuniting with family, pride over succeeding at a challenging task and/or interest in a creative, new project. The problem is that we don’t know much about these positive emotions, as most emotion research has focused on negative emotions (Ekman, 2003, Fredrickson, 2000). It is important to clarify the definition of positive emotions. Some researchers focus on a broad dimension of global positive affect (e.g., Kochanska, 1997; Kochanska & Askan,
Parental Socialization

1995; Liable & Thompson, 2000), whereas others provide greater specificity (e.g., Bosacki & Moore, 2004; Cole, Teti & Zahn-Waxler, 2003; Tugade, Fredrickson & Feldman-Barrett, 2004). Sixteen specific positive or enjoyable emotions were proposed by Ekman (2003). These include joy, happiness, contentment, excitement, relief, wonder, ecstasy or bliss, gratitude, elevation, schadenfreude (gloating over success), fiero (more than just pride – you bask in your success without others needing to know about your accomplishment) and naches (the glow of pleasure plus pride that only a child can give to its parents). Some, but not all, of these sixteen of these positive emotions have been empirically studied in the past and in the current study, parents’ reactions to children’s displays of pride, excitement/exuberance, interest and happiness, as well as children’s knowledge for display rules for these positive emotions were investigated. This subset of positive emotions was selected because these positive emotions appear to be the most salient in families’ lives, as well as the most empirically measured in emotion literature.

According to Fredrickson’s (1998) model, the form and function of positive and negative emotions are distinct and complementary. Past theorists have argued that emotions are associated with specific action tendencies (Frijda, 1986); however, because some positive emotions may spark changes in primarily cognitive activity, Fredrickson (1998) argued that positive emotions are associated with thought-action tendencies. Negative emotions, such as anger, narrow an individual’s momentary thought-action repertoire toward specific actions, in contrast to positive emotions, such as joy, which broaden an individual’s momentary thought-action repertoire, prompting them to pursue wider range of thought and action (Fredrickson, 2000). Additionally, the communicative theory of emotions argues that positive and negative emotions may serve different goals.
For example, feeling happy encourages one to continue until the goal is reached, whereas feeling angry or frustrated signals that one needs to stop and re-evaluate the situation and possibly alter one’s course of action (Oatley & Johnson-Laird, 1996). Therefore, it may be possible that parents’ socialization of positive and negative emotions play different roles in children’s development of social and emotional skills.

Positive emotions may be highly motivating and cause us to do things that are good for us (Ekman, 2003; Fredrickson, 1998). Positive emotions and related positive states have been linked to broadened scopes of attention, cognition, and action. For example, positive emotions, specifically amusement and contentment, broadened the scope of college students’ attention on a visual processing task (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). Additionally, positive emotions enhance creativity and problem solving, as well as promote flexible and adaptive thinking (Greene & Noice, 1988; Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987; Isen, 2002).

Positive emotions may broaden one’s thinking, which in turn can build one’s enduring personal resources (Fredrickson, 1998). We may experience improved well-being and overall psychological health by working to cultivate positive emotions in ourselves and those around us (Fredrickson, 2002; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Positive emotions produce flourishing within the present, pleasant moment and over the long-term, as positive emotions trigger upward spirals toward future increases in subjective well-being (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). Through their effects on broadened thinking, positive emotions may predict future increases in positive emotions (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). Positive emotions and broaden-thinking coping mutually influence one another and this creates an upward spiral toward emotional well-being.
The experience of positive emotions serves an important function in helping an individual to regulate negative emotional experiences and may work to undo the effects of negative emotions (Fredrickson, 2002; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2002). According to Fredrickson’s (2002) ‘undoing’ hypothesis, positive emotions tend to function as “efficient antidotes” for the narrowing and deleterious effects of negative emotions. The experience of joy and contentment by others may undo the cardiovascular aftereffects of negative emotions such as sadness (e.g., Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998).

These studies, primarily with adults, suggest that the experience of positive emotions in children’s lives may well enhance well-being, broaden children’s thought and action which make them better problem solvers, build children’s physical, intellectual, and social resources, and enrich their social networks. To examine how positive emotions may influence children, parents in the current study were asked to report on positive emotion expressivity in the family and reactions to children’s positive emotions.

The Role of Parents

Parents are in the unique position to cultivate positive emotions in their children and help children build the resources they need to flourish in every day life. The family’s affective environment is a powerful context for the socialization of emotional knowledge, social cognitive skills, and social competence (Cassidy, Parke, Butkowsky, & Braungart, 1992). Effective parents know their children, talk to and pay attention to their children, and set up a warm and accepting context to facilitate communication between parent and child (Grusec, 2002).
Fredrickson (1998) suggests that parents may cultivate positive emotions by encouraging their children to be reflective about their positive experiences. Over time, parents’ socialization goals seem to shift from inducing positive emotions in their children directly to children generating these positive emotions on their own (Fredrickson, 1998; 2001). Parents may foster pride in their children by praising them for their accomplishments and teaching children to recognize their own accomplishments. Eventually, children will be able to generate this pride in themselves without direct praise from parents (Denhman, Mitchell-Copeland, Strandberg, Auerbach & Blair, 1997; Fredrickson, 1998).

Parents’ appropriate responsiveness to children’s positive affect, but also to distress, appears to be an important contributor to optimal child functioning (Denhman, et al., 1997). Paying attention to and positively reinforcing children’s emotions by accepting and acknowledging them may pave the way for children to learn more about emotions in themselves and others, reflected in their social and emotion competence. Lower levels of maternal acceptance of a child’s negative emotion have been linked to lower levels of emotion regulation in children and higher levels of child aggression (Ramsden & Hubbard, 2002). This may be reflected in parents’ self-reported reactions to children’s displays of positive and negative emotion, a main feature of the current study.

Temperamental qualities involving emotions may be partially inherited (Rende, 2000), for example, interest/persistence and anger proneness seem to involve genetic underpinnings. Other emotion qualities, however, such as positive affect, exhibit evidence for shared environmental effects (Goldsmith, Buss, & Lemery, 1997). The expression of positive affect may then be learned in the family environment and this will
be investigated in this study via parental beliefs, self-reported parental reactions and emotion expressivity.

**Specific Mechanisms of Parental Socialization of Emotion**

Parental socialization of emotion is defined as “parenting behaviors that reflect parental beliefs, goals, and values in regard to their children’s experience, expression and modulation of emotion.” (Eisenberg et al., 1998a, p. 97). Parents utilize four types of socialization behaviors: parental reactions, parental expressiveness, parental discussion of emotion, and parental control of niches (see Eisenberg, et al., 1998a; 1998b; Parke & McDowell, 1998).

Parental reactions to children’s negative emotions have received the most empirical attention (e.g., non-supportive reactions, Eisenberg, Fabes & Murphy, 1996). Parent emotion-related socializing behaviors of neglecting, punishing, and overriding of sadness, anger, and fear have been found to contribute to higher levels of children’s psychological distress (Garside & Klimes-Dougan, 2002). Although research is limited, parental reactions to children’s expression of positive emotions appear to influence children’s academic achievement and positive peer and teacher ratings of social competence (e.g., Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1996; McDowell et al., 2002).

Parental negative and positive expressiveness of emotion has been linked with a variety of child’s outcomes (see Halberstadt et al., 1999, for a review). Parental positive emotion expressiveness has been linked to positive child outcomes including enhanced ability to recognize and understand both positive and negative emotions (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002; Dunsmore & Smallen, 2001) and better peer relations and popularity among peers (Boyum & Parke, 1995).
Additionally, parental discussion of both positive and negative emotions, another important emotion-related socialization behavior, has been linked to children’s display rule knowledge (Garner, 1999); emotion understanding (Brown & Dunn, 1996; Denham, Zoller & Couchoud, 1994); and high ratings of prosocial behavior (Denham, 1997). 

Niche selection, although more in the theory stage than empirically tested, has been argued to be another form of parental socialization of emotion (Fredrickson, 2001; Parke & McDowell, 1998). Parents and children actively seek out environments or niches in which they feel comfortable. Niche-picking is a highly effective means of regulating emotions and maximizing the experience of desired emotions (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004). Parents may select niches or situations where young children can maximize their experiences of joy or pride and minimize the experience of negative emotions (Fredrickson, 2001).

Two of the four parental emotion-related socialization behaviors were investigated in the current study: Parental reactions to children’s displays of emotion, and parental emotion expressivity. Parental reactions and expressivity were chosen as mechanisms to examine because they appear to be the behaviors that parents are most likely to model or utilize to teach children about positive emotions (Duff, 2004).

*Parental Reactions to Children’s Emotions*

Parental reactions to negative emotions may take the form of punishing, minimizing, distress, problem-focused, emotion-focused and encouraging (Eisenberg, Fabes & Murphy, 1997; Fabes, Poulin, Eisenberg, Madden-Dierdich, 2002; Gottman, et al., 1996). Parental punitive and minimizing reactions, as measured by the CCNES (Coping with Children’s Negative Emotions Scale, Fabes et al., 2002) have been
associated with children’s low socioemotional competence (Jones, Eisenberg, Fabes & MacKinnon, 2002). In addition, parental support and emotional encouragement of children’s negative emotions have been positively related to children’s decoding of emotions and emotion expressiveness in contrast to parental distress and non-supportive reactions, such as punishing (Fabes et al, 2002).

Recognizing that positive emotions may also need to be encouraged and/or regulated (e.g., Rydell, Berlin & Bohlin, 2003), a measure was recently created to capture parents’ reaction to children’s expression of positive emotions. Parental reactions to children’s positive emotions are thought to take the form of teaching/controlling, encouragement, reprimand, or discomfort (Ladouceur, Reid, & Jacques, 2002). Teach/Control is directing the child’s actions, but also includes reasons for a change in behavior (e.g., tell the child that he may not jump on his seat because it bothers other spectators). Encouragement is similar to the encouraging behaviors in relation to negative emotions as measured by the CCNES (e.g., smile to let my child know that I am happy to see she is enjoying herself). Reprimand is most like punishing behaviors in relation to negative emotions (e.g., tell my child to sit and calm down). Discomfort is most similar to distress as depicted in relation to negative emotions (e.g., be embarrassed by my child’s behavior). Ladouceur et al. (2002) do not include emotion-focused or problem-focused solving, as they do not think most parents will have a need to “solve” the problem of positive emotions. Problem- and emotion-focused strategies have more to do with responding to children’s distress or helping the child to feel better and these strategies may not be needed when reacting to children’s positive emotions.
We do not yet know anything about children’s outcomes based on these self-reported parental reactions to children’s positive emotions. The current study utilized the new parent self-report measure, PRCPS, which assesses parental reactions to preschool and elementary school-aged children’s positive emotions (Ladouceur, et al., 2002). Parents responded to a variety of vignettes by choosing how they would react in the situation. Because of the newness of this measure, only preliminary validity is available. However, links between this measure and measures of parents’ reactions to negative emotions, parents’ expressiveness, and family environment suggest that the PRCPS possesses acceptable levels of convergent validity. For example, a significant relationship was established between the PRCPS subscale of discomfort and parents’ distressed reactions to children’s negative emotions, as measured by the CCNES. In addition, relationships were established between PRCPS subscales of discomfort and reprimand and parents’ negative expressivity. No relationships were established between positive expressivity and any of the four reactions, although one would expect a relationship between positive expressivity and parents’ encouragement (Ladouceur et al., 2002).

Additional relationships have been found among subscales of the PRCPS and the Parents’ Beliefs About Children’s Emotions Questionnaire (PBACE; Halberstadt, Dunsmore, Bryant, Parker, Rudd, & Thompson, 2005). For example, the Teach/Control subscale was related to parents’ beliefs that emotions are bad. Parents’ belief that emotion expression is dangerous was positively associated with the reprimand and discomfort subscales of the PRCPS (Halberstadt et al., 2005). The current research aimed to further explore this new measure, as well as parental reactions to negative emotions.
and its relation to children’s coping and knowledge of display rules. These hypotheses are further delineated in the coping and display rule sections.

**Parental Expression of Emotion**

Parental expression of emotion is another parental emotion-related socialization behavior examined in the current study. Expressiveness is defined as a persistent pattern or style of exhibiting nonverbal and verbal expressions that often, but not always, appear to be emotion related (Halberstadt, 1991). Emotional expressions may be considered either positive or negative and either dominant or submissive. Positive emotion expressions involve emotions such as happiness or pride, whereas negative emotion expressions involve emotions such as anger or fear (Halberstadt, 1991).

Children actively construct the rules for appropriate internalization and expression of emotion from individuals, mostly parents, who they observe (Burrowes & Halberstadt, 1987). Early socialization practices can be seen as impacting individual emotion expressiveness over the period from preschool to early elementary school (Roberts, 1999). Parental emotion expressiveness teaches children, through modeling, which emotions are acceptable to express in the family and in certain situations. For example, children whose mothers are more positively expressive with them are, in turn, more expressive with their mothers (Cassidy et al., 1992). Additionally, parents’ negative expressiveness is positively associated with children’s self-expressiveness of negative affect (Halberstadt et al., 1999). Both positive and negative expressiveness were explored in the current study.

There is mounting evidence that children from positively expressive homes are themselves more expressive, are more accurate in decoding the expression of positive
emotion, are more popular with peers, and have a good understanding of both positive and negative emotions and other emotional reactions (Boyum & Parke, 1995; Cassidy, et al., 1992; Denham & Kochanoff, 2002; Dunsmore & Smallen, 2001; Halberstadt, et al., 1999; Saarni, 1999). Children from positively expressive families also have greater emotion regulation as rated by their teachers (see Halberstadt et al., 1999, for a review).

In another study, children’s regulation of emotion mediated the relationship between mothers’ expression of positive emotions and children’s social competence and adjustment (Eisenberg, Gershoff, Fabes, Shepard, Cumberland, Losoya, et al., 2001). The evidence for negative expressiveness is more complex than for positive expressiveness. Although some have found that parents’ negative expressivity negatively contributes to children’s prosocial behaviors (e.g., children’s aggression, Ramsden & Hubbard, 2002) this relationship may change depending on clarity of communication (Boyum & Parke, 1995).

In the current study, parents reported on their emotion expressiveness in the family for both positive and negative emotions. One goal was to determine if parental expressiveness in the family influences children’s development of display rule knowledge. Because of exposure to parental model of model emotion-related behaviors, children may develop a repertoire of skills to utilize in contexts beyond the family. Additionally, links between parents’ expressivity and children’s coping were also hypothesized. Parents who express positive emotions in the family may model for their children the importance of those positive emotions. In turn, children may then be able to utilize these positive emotions in times of need, such as dealing with peer stressors. Parents who model negative emotions in the family may have children who do not
develop coping resources necessary to cope with peer stressors. Instead, these children may minimize or avoid the stressors because they do not know how to deal with them.

Parents’ Beliefs about Children’s Emotions

Parental beliefs represent what parents think about their children and their own parenting behaviors. Parents’ emotion-related behaviors, as highlighted by Eisenberg et al. (1998), may be preceded by parental beliefs. For example, parental meta-emotion, a combination of parental thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors about emotions, has been linked with a wide assortment of important outcomes for children, including peer relations, academic achievement, and child illness (Gottman, Guralnick, Wilson, Swanson, & Murray, 1997; Katz, Wilson, & Gottman, 1999; Katz & Windecker-Nelson, 2004). Whereas parents with dismissive beliefs ignore or trivialize children’s emotions, parents who believe in guiding their children with regard to emotion are thought to be aware of emotions, to assist children in experiencing and regulating emotion, and to be supportive of their children’s emotional expressions and experiences (Gottman, 1997). However, because the meta-emotion construct includes a broad mixture of belief and behavior, it is useful in new studies to distinguish specific beliefs and behaviors, and their subsequent impact on children (Cowan, 1996; Eisenberg, 1996).

Halberstadt & Dunmore (2002) proposed three dimensions of parental beliefs about emotion: Value (are emotions good or bad), control (children can or cannot control their emotions) and parents as socializers (do children learn about emotions on their own or do parents coach, scaffold or guide children’s emotions). Parents’ beliefs about emotion as good or dangerous and beliefs that parents should guide or not guide their children’s emotions were the focus of the current study. Halberstadt, Thompson, Parker
& Dunsmore (2006) argued that beliefs about the value and danger of emotion should be treated separately so as to allow parents to consider them as orthogonal dimensions. This is based on the idea that the simultaneous presence of two seemingly oppositely-valenced feelings (e.g., graduation as a happy and sad moment) may suggest that seemingly contradictory beliefs may also exist concomitantly (Schimmack, Oishi & Diener, 2002). In a qualitative analysis of parental beliefs about children emotions, similarities and differences among these three dimensions were found across three different cultures (Parker, Halberstadt, Dunsmore, Townley, Beale, Thompson & Bryant, 2005). In the current study, I explored how parental beliefs about children’s emotions influence parents’ self-reported emotion-related behaviors, specifically expressivity and reactions to children’s emotions.

In the current study, I predicted that parents’ value of emotion would be positively related to parents’ supportive reactions (teaching and encouraging) to children’s expression of positive emotions. Parents who believe that it is good to express happiness or pride may encourage their children’s expression or take the opportunity to teach their children about the rules for expressing positive emotions in certain situations compared to parents who do not value emotion. Additionally, I predicted that parents’ belief that positive emotions are dangerous would be positively related to parents’ non-supportive reactions. The more parents believe that positive emotions are dangerous, the more parents will react to children’s positive emotions in non-supportive ways (e.g., reprimand or discomfort). If parents believe that the expression of pride or excitement is dangerous, then these parents may be more likely to feel discomfort when their children express these positive emotions or punish children’s expression.
Hypotheses were also generated to link parents’ beliefs about children’s negative emotions and parents’ reaction to children’s negative emotions. Parents’ belief that negative emotions are good was predicted to be positively related to parents’ encouragement of children’s negative emotions. Parents may believe that the expression of anger is valuable and may be more likely to encourage their children’s expression of these negative feelings. Across three cultures, parents tended to believe that it is good for children to express anger in a constructive way, rather than suppress those feelings (Parker et al., 2005). Additionally, I predicted that parents’ belief that emotions are dangerous would be positively related to parents’ non-supportive reactions (e.g., distress, punishment) to children’s negative emotions. The more parents believe that expressing anger or sadness is dangerous for the child the more parents punish their children’s emotion expression or try to minimize the children’s feelings.

Parents’ beliefs about emotions may also be related to their own emotion expressiveness in the family. I predicted that parents’ belief that positive emotions are good would be positively associated with parents’ positive emotion expressiveness. Parents’ belief that negative emotions are good would be positively related to parents’ negative emotion expressiveness. I hypothesized that parents’ belief that parents should teach children about emotions would be positively related to parents’ positive expressiveness. Additionally, I predicted that the more parents believe that children should learn on their own, the more negative emotions parents report expressing in the family.

Parental beliefs about the value of emotion, as well as guiding emotion may influence various child outcomes. For example, parents’ belief that emotions are valuable
was predictive of children’s use of emotion-oriented and support-seeking coping, and lack of distraction as a coping strategy (Halberstadt, Thompson, Parker, & Dunsmore, 2006). Although this research examined children’s coping in response to an intense event, it is possible that we may find similar relationships between parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion and children’s coping with everyday peer stressors. Regarding guidance, mothers’ beliefs about teaching emotion language were associated with greater increases in children emotion knowledge over the first semester of kindergarten (Dunsmore & Karn, 2004). Parents’ beliefs in the value and teaching of emotion may be related to children’s knowledge of display rules and coping with peer stressors. The current study’s hypotheses for children’s coping and display rule knowledge will be discussed in those respective sections.

Based on Eisenberg et al.’s, (1998) model of parental socialization of emotion, it is likely that parental beliefs will influence children’s outcomes via parental emotion-related behaviors. Whether or not parental self-reported behaviors mediated the relationships among parental beliefs and children’s coping and display rules was tested in the current study. Parental beliefs about children’s emotions were expected to be associated with parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions and parents’ positive expressivity, and these parental behaviors were, in turn, expected to influence children’s coping and display rule knowledge. Additionally, parental beliefs about children’s emotions were expected to be associated with parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions and parents’ negative expressivity, and these parental behaviors will, in turn, influence children’s coping and display rule knowledge.
Relationship between Parents and Peer World

Children in middle childhood confront challenges in their emotional lives that may create difficulties at the time, but in the long run foster emotion development (von Salisch, 2001). One of the major challenges that children face is taking what they learned in the parent-child relationship and incorporating those emotion lessons into their relationships with their peers. Balance of power is one of the contributors in this challenge. The balance of power between parent and child is asymmetrical in that most parents transmit their values, beliefs and rules, and children are expected to comply (von Salisch, 2001). Although children do influence parents’ emotional behaviors, more often than not parents set the emotional tone in the house. In many, but not all peer relationships, the balance of social power is more symmetrical (von Salisch, 2001). Peers also have an influence on children’s emotion development because they have first-hand knowledge of the emotional climate of “kid culture”, whereas most parents do not. Peer groups have their own set of rules about the expression and regulation of emotions that may be separate from that of parents.

Children’s Display Rule Knowledge and Use

As members of the peer culture, children must adhere to the rules that guide interactions in this world. These rules may include when to express or not express emotions, such as sadness, anger, or pride. Children who are knowledgeable about emotions and who can control the expression of emotion are better able to negotiate complex interpersonal exchanges with others (Saarni, 1999). This knowledge is a marker for children’s affective social competence (Halberstadt, Denham & Dunsmore, 2001). Children use expressive behavior to modulate relationship dynamics and understand the
importance of following display rules (e.g. when it is appropriate to express anger). As they get older, children begin to make the distinction between genuine versus managed displays of emotions and have an increased awareness of emotional scripts in conjunction with social roles (Saarni, 1999). By elementary school, there is substantial awareness of display rules and the ability to articulate goals to support the use of display rules (Cole, 1986; Jones et al., 1998).

Display rules in the peer culture seem to favor dampening the expression of many emotions (e.g. not showing sadness in the form of crying) (von Salisch, 2001). Children’s decisions to regulate their emotionally expressive behavior may be influenced by the type of observer present and emotions experienced. For example, children were more likely to control the expression of negative emotions such as anger or sadness in the presence of their peers than their parents (Shipman, Zeman & Stegall, 2001; Shipman, Zeman, Nesin, & Fitzgerald, 2003; Zeman & Garber, 1996).

What this research indicates is that an important rule in the peer emotional world is remaining calm or in control in the face of most negative emotions. However, we do not know whether or not the experience of positive emotions, such as joy or exuberance, need to be dampened in the presence of peers. The capacity to modulate positive emotions may be an important social skill. This is especially true when another person (e.g. parent or peer) is not experiencing the same positive emotion or when a person’s display of positive emotion may invoke a negative emotional experience in a social partner (McDowell & Parke, 2000). Parents recognize the need for children to regulate their displays of positive emotions, such as pride, in addition to regulating their feelings of anger or sadness (Parker et al., 2005).
Two components comprise children’s display rule knowledge: The understanding that the expression of emotion must be regulated in accord with situational demands (termed expressive regulation), and the goals/motivation underlying the use of display rules (Gnepp & Hess, 1986; Jones, et al., 1998). Children learn the need to mask an internal feeling with a discrepant facial expression and thus, regulate their emotional expression (Jones et al., 1998). Along with this, children must be motivated to express an emotion that is different from their internal feeling and should be able to articulate, as well as understand, the reason or goal for doing so. It is important to consider both knowledge of display rules and goals for the use of display rules because it is possible that children may acquire the knowledge of display rules without actually using them (McDowell & Parke, 2005). Several different goals for display rule use have been distinguished, including prosocial, self-protective, and norm-maintenance (Jones et al., 1998; Zeman & Garber, 1996). Of particular interest to this study were prosocial and self-protective reasons for display rule use. Children may use a display rule for prosocial reasons to protect feelings of others and to maintain harmonious relationships, in contrast to self-protective reasons, which include avoiding negative consequences, gaining advantages or preserving self-esteem (Jones et al., 1998; McDowell & Parke, 2000). Children may also endorse a display rule for norm maintenance reasons because children are concerned with following rules or normative expectations (e.g., one is supposed to look happy when receiving a present); however, links between norm maintenance display rule knowledge and children’s social competence have not been found or studied (e.g., Garner, 1999; Jones et al., 1998; Shipman et al., 2001). Therefore, only prosocial and self-protective display rules were investigated in this study.
Children’s knowledge of what are real and apparent emotions may vary according to the motivation to hide emotions in peer interactions (Gosselin, Warren & Diotte, 2002). Elementary school-aged children understood prosocial and self-protective display rules with similar accuracy (Gosselin et al., 2002). This may mean that although children are often told by parents to modify their expressive behavior to protect other people’s feelings, they may also experience the consequences of overtly expressing their emotions. Children in middle school report being more likely to inhibit emotional expression for prosocial rather than self-protective goals (Shipman et al., 2001). Additionally, children who endorsed regulating one’s emotion expression along with a prosocial goal consistently demonstrated social competence in terms of being accepted by peers, highly rated by teachers, and less likely to respond to hypothetical peer conflicts with anger (Jones et al., 1998).

As mentioned, the research on display rule knowledge and goals for regulation of positive emotions is limited, despite a call for more research in this area (von Salisch, 2001). One exception is a study that examined children’s display rule knowledge and use for negative and positive emotions (McDowell & Parke, 2000). Children were more likely to offer a prosocial reason than a self-protective reason for using a display rule in the presence of a positive event (McDowell & Parke, 2000). For example, if a child achieves a high test score or wins a special class position and his/her friend does not, that child may hide his/her positive feelings to avoid hurting the friend’s feelings. The modulation of positive emotions may have benefits. Children who endorsed more prosocial display rule use for positive emotions were rated as more socially competent by both teachers and peers (McDowell & Parke, 2000). Of particular interest to the current
study was whether or not children utilize display rules for positive emotions or if this knowledge is only important for negative emotions.

Given that display rule knowledge is important for peer relationships, it is important to have a valid method for assessing children’s use and knowledge of display rules for both positive and negative emotions. Hypothetical vignettes have been used by past researchers for this purpose (Gnepp & Hess, 1986; Jones et al., 1998; McDowell & Parke, 2000). However, children’s responses to these hypothetical vignettes may not correspond to the behaviors they would enact or emotions they would express during live peer interactions; the one study comparing them for anger found moderate relations (Parker, et al., 2001). Therefore, in addition to interviewing children with hypothetical vignettes in the current study, children participated in a live peer interaction, creating an observation-based index of display rules for positive emotions. The strength of the current study is that to date, only one study has created an observational paradigm to explore children’s display rules for positive emotions. Early work by Reissland and Harris (1991) examined toddlers and preschool-aged children’s behaviors and emotion expression during a pride-eliciting game with their siblings. The older children used display rules to mask their pride more often than the younger children. No one has, as yet, compared knowledge and behavior for positive emotion with middle-school aged children.

Links between children’s self-report and observation indices for display rule use with peers have not been widely studied. Most studies utilize either children’s responses to hypothetical vignettes or observational measures. Many researchers have relied on the disappointment paradigm as an observation measure of display rule knowledge for
negative emotions. Children’s reactions to an inappropriate gift may reflect their ability to use display rules in a disappointing situation (e.g., McDowell & Parke, 2000; 2005). However, this method may not tap into peer relations because children are observed modulating their emotion in the presence of the interviewer/adult rather than a peer. Other researchers have observed children playing challenging games with cheating confederate children or with games that are rigged for failure. Children’s responses, mostly negative, during the game are then coded for appropriate display rule use (e.g., Parker et al., 2001). Employing a confederate for the current study was unfortunately not possible (due to peer contamination and IRB) but definitely warrants further consideration.

One goal of the current study was to examine the associations between children’s responses to the hypothetical vignettes for positive emotions and children’s socially appropriate responses during the live peer interaction. Children first competed with a classmate to guess the correct number of items in a jar and then played a challenging game. These live interactions provided rich opportunities to capture children’s display rule knowledge. I hypothesized a moderate, positive correlation between children’s responses to the hypothetical vignettes for positive emotions and children’s positive emotion modulation during the live interaction. Specifically, I expected this positive association to be found between the hypothetical vignette and live interaction that were the most similar. For example, children’s behaviors in the jar estimation game may be similar to those reported in the hypothetical vignettes involving winning or receiving something that a friend did not (e.g., coveted position or good grade). Therefore, I predicted a positive relationship between children’s display rule knowledge in the two
vignettes and children’s use of display rules during the jar estimation. If children report masking positive emotions in the context of earning a better grade or being chosen for a special role, they may be likely to also modulate their positive emotion in the context of winning praise and a prize for the better guess. These associations may provide evidence for the relationship between children’s display rule knowledge and actual use of this knowledge in live interactions with peers.

Parenting behaviors, as well as the emotional climate of the family may also impact children’s development of display rule knowledge. Mothers’ explanation of the causes and consequences of emotions to their preschool-aged children was positively associated with children’s expressive regulation knowledge and use of prosocial display rules as third graders (Garner, 1999). Additionally, parents’ positive affect displayed during a parent-child discussion also predicted children using fewer negative and more positive emotional displays during a disappointing gift situation (McDowell & Parke, 2005). Parents’ self-reported behaviors may also influence children’s display rule use. Parents’ self-reported control over their children’s emotions was negatively related to children’s overall knowledge of display rules for negative emotions, but not related to children’s reasoning (McDowell & Parke, 2000). This does not mean that negative environments will necessarily stifle the development of emotion knowledge structures. Higher levels of negative emotion expressiveness in the family, as reported by mothers, enhanced children’s usage of display rules with self-protective goals but detracted from the generation of prosocial display rule knowledge (Jones, et al, 1998).

It is important to examine multiple pathways through which parents may influence children’s knowledge for display rules, as well as goals for regulating their
expression. Parents’ beliefs about the value and danger of emotions may be one influence on children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning. I predicted that parents’ belief that positive emotions are good would be positively related to children’s knowledge for positive emotions and prosocial reasoning. Additionally, parents’ belief that negative emotions are good would be related to children’s knowledge for negative emotions and prosocial reasoning. No specific hypotheses were delineated for parental guidance beliefs.

Parents’ reactions to children’s emotions may be another influence on children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning. No study to date has investigated the relationships among parents’ reactions to children’s positive or negative emotions and children’s display rule knowledge for positive or negative emotions. However, it makes sense that parents’ self-reported reactions to children’s emotion would influence children’s knowledge for regulating their emotions because parents are reacting to their children’s displays of emotions in support or non-supportive ways. These parental reactions may shape children’s future expressions of positive or negative emotions in the presence of others. I predicted that parents’ supportive reactions (teaching and encouragement) to children’s expression of positive emotions would be positively related to children’s knowledge of display rules for positive emotions, as well as prosocial goals for display rule use. Parents’ non-supportive reactions to children’s positive emotions (distress and reprimand) may be negatively related to children’s knowledge and positively related to self-protective reasons for display rule use. However, it may be possible that no relationship will exist between parents’ non-supportive reactions and children’s display
rule use because children who are constantly reprimanded for their expression without any explanation may not fully understand the reasons for regulating their emotion.

Parents’ encouraging reactions to children’s negative emotions were hypothesized to be positively associated with children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions and endorsement of prosocial reasons. Parents’ non-supportive reactions, in the form of punishment, distress and minimization, were expected to be negatively related to children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions, and positively related to self-protective reasoning. Children who are punished for expressing negative emotions may not have the opportunity to develop knowledge for display rules. Additionally, these children may endorse self-protective reasoning for regulating their emotions because they are likely to get into trouble or punished and need to protect themselves from further punishment.

A third influence on children’s display rule knowledge and goals may be parents’ emotion expressiveness in the family. Children of parents who encourage emotional expression have more access to their own emotions and may come to understand emotions better (Denham & Kochanoff, 2002). Children who experience high parental emotion expressivity (whether positive or negative) in the family may have knowledge for display rules, but the difference may lie in their motivation for using those display rules. As mentioned before, parents’ expressiveness has been linked to children’s use of prosocial and self-protective goals for regulating negative emotions (e.g., Jones et al., 1998).

In the current study, it was predicted that parents who express positive emotions in the family will have children who endorse prosocial, rather than self-protective,
reasons for modulating positive and negative emotions. Parents model the expression of happiness, pride, empathy, gratitude and this shapes children’s expression of positive emotions. These children will be better able to understand the need to modify their emotion expressions in the presence of others, especially if it may hurt another’s feelings. Parents who express negative emotions in the family will have children who have display rule knowledge for negative emotions and endorse self-protective reasons for display rule use. It is important to note that the relationships between parents’ reactions and expressivity with children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning may be moderated by child gender (Brody, 1999). This will be discussed in the following sections on gender differences in emotion socialization.

Children’s Everyday Coping with Peer Stressors

Although it has been well documented that major life stressors have a negative impact on various aspects of children’s lives, minor daily stressors may also disrupt children’s lives (Repetti, McGrath & Ishikawa, 1999). Elementary and middle school-aged children’s everyday stressors fall into four categories: school (e.g., bad grades), siblings (e.g., yelling/bothering), parent-child conflict (e.g., punishments) and friends (e.g., being teased or bullied) (Spirito, Stark, Grace, & Stamoulis, 1991). Children may experience one or more of these stressors on a daily basis and, over time, the cumulative effect of these stressors may drain the intrapsychic resources that children rely on to succeed in school. The cumulative impact of daily stressors has been linked to psychological maladjustment (Compas, Conner-Smith, Saltzman, Thomsen, & Wadsworth, 2001). Of interest to the current study was exploring the types of stressful interactions children experience in the peer world, as well as children’s coping strategies.
Children’s appraisal and response to these everyday stressors have been studied in relation to children’s negative peer experiences, such as rejection; children’s transition to junior high school; and children’s daily experiences with siblings and parents (Causey & Dubow, 1993; Preuss & Dubow, 2004; Sandstrom, 2004; Spirito, et al., 1991). Coping has been defined as “constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). There is a large literature on coping with different views on the dimensions for coping. Children’s coping abilities have been conceptualized by some as ‘problem-focused’ or ‘emotion-focused’ (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and by others as approach or avoidant strategies (Causey & Dubow, 1993). Others argue for more than a two-dimension distinction to include strategies that may not fit into two categories. For example, in the specific area of children’s coping with peer rejection, four types of strategies have been distinguished: active, denial, ruminative and aggressive (Sandstrom, 2004).

In the broader context of peer stressors, which includes peer rejection, exploring which strategies middle-school age children use to deal with everyday stress was of interest in the current study. Because of the importance of friendship in middle childhood (e.g., Hartup, 1992), and the linkage between peer relationships and adjustment later in life (Parker & Asher, 1987), children in the current study were asked to focus on friendship problems when discussing current stressors to investigate the different types of peer situations that children report as stressful in middle childhood. Focusing on children’s coping with specific stressful situations (e.g., problems with peers or academic
failure) contributes to researchers’ abilities to learn much more about how children cope within each context (Repetti et al., 1999).

Various self-report measures and checklists have been developed to assess which children’s coping strategies deal with common everyday problems (Causey & Dubow, 1993; Spirito, Stark & Williams, 1988). For example, the ‘KidCope’ was designed to assess children’s cognitive and behavioral coping strategies in response to a self-generated everyday stressor, as well as responses to a various problem scenarios (Spirito et al., 1988). Although this checklist has been used to measure children’s coping with everyday stressors, its original use was as a diagnostic tool for clinical populations and hence it may not be appropriate for this purposes of this study (e.g., Spirito, Francis, Overholser, & Frank, 1996). Another measure developed by Carver, Scheier & Weintraub (1989), ‘COPE’, has been used in studies to assess the coping strategies of older children and young adolescents. For example, a recent study used the COPE to assess adolescents’ coping with peer stressors (Washburn-Ormachea, Hillman & Sawilowsky, 2004). Children were asked to generate their own peer stressor, rather than reporting their use of coping strategies in response to a standard stressor (e.g., peer rejection). Among adolescents in eighth and ninth grades, the most frequently reported stressful event was argument/fights with same-sex friends, although boys were more likely to report stressful peer situations involving physical threats and fights than girls (Washburn et al., 2004). Four categories of coping strategies for peer stressors have been identified: Active, avoidant, emotion-focused, and acceptance (Phelps & Jarvis, 1994; Washburn et al., 2004). These are similar to coping strategies that other researchers have
utilized to measure both minor and major stressors (e.g., Ayers, Sandler, West, & Roosa, 1996; Lengua & Long, 2002).

How children respond to peer stressors may be predictive of adaptation to important events in middle childhood. For example, higher levels of approach coping (e.g., talking to someone) and lower levels of avoidance coping (e.g., pretending nothing happened) in response to a problematic stressor when transitioning into junior high predicted improvement in effectiveness in coping, as well as positive adaptation to junior high school (Causey & Dubow, 1993). Additionally, active coping strategies (e.g., thinking more positively or attempting to solve the problem) have been linked with lower levels of psychological symptoms and higher self-esteem (Ayers, et al., 1996). These problem-focused/active coping strategies are considered adaptive, which has been consistently shown across children’s coping literature. Another adaptive coping strategy, support-seeking, has been related to children’s social competence (e.g., Kliewer & Sandler, 1993).

In contrast, coping strategies such as rumination, aggression or avoidance, have been linked to higher levels of internalizing and externalizing problems (e.g., Ayers et al., 1996; Causey & Dubow, 1992). Although the general consensus is that avoidant coping is related to poorer functioning for children, in some uncontrollable situations, avoidant coping may be effective (Losoya et al., 1998). Children who reported using ruminative coping (e.g., isolating themselves, engaging in wishful thinking) in response to peer rejection had higher reports of depression and social anxiety (Sandstrom, 2004). These strategies have been perceived as maladaptive (Compas et al., 2001). Therefore, the current study investigated both adaptive (e.g., active) and maladaptive (e.g., avoidant)
coping strategies in the peer context. Children’s use of these strategies in the peer domain may be associated with the emotions they experience in the family. Positive emotions may facilitate children’s development of effective coping strategies (Fredrickson, 1998).

Children’s perceptions of control over the stressor, as well as the importance of the incident may influence children’s use of coping strategies (e.g., Hunter & Boyle, 2002; Thurber & Weisz, 1997). For example, problem-focused coping efforts were found to be more adaptive when used in situations that were perceived as controllable, as compared to uncontrollable (e.g., Compas, Malcarne, & Fonacaro, 1988). Children in the current study were asked to indicate how much the situation mattered to them and the amount of control they had over the stressor. I predicted that children who feel they had greater control over the stressful situation were more likely to use strategies that involved taking action or seeking support compared to those who felt they did not have a good amount of control over the situation. Children who do not perceive they had a lot of control would be more likely to use avoidance or just accept the situation. Additionally, I predicted that the more importance children placed on the stressful situation, the more children would use active or support-seeking strategies. Children who did not perceive the stressor as important were predicted to report accepting or avoiding the situation.

There is a debate as to whether or not children utilize the same coping strategies in response to different stressors (Compas et al., 2001). Children’s coping strategies may be context-specific, with different strategies emerging in response to different kinds of stressors (Causey & Dubow, 1993; Sandstrom, 2004). Most children are exposed to a variety of stressors, and children may respond by seeking help from others to change the situation or regulating emotional responses to the stressor (Repetti et al., 1999). Some
researchers have found that children are likely to exhibit the same types of coping strategies when faced with different stressors (e.g., sibling or family) rather than alter their use of a particular strategy across situations (Donaldson, Prinstein, Danovsky & Spirito, 2000). However, patterns appeared to differ between sibling and peers stressors and it has been argued that these relationship stressors inside and outside of the family may be dealt with in different ways (Donaldson et al., 2000). For example, blaming others most often occurred in relation to problems involving friends as opposed to problems with family or school (Spirito et al., 1990). These findings demonstrate the importance of measuring children’s coping in a specific context, such as peer relationships.

Of particular interest is how parents influence children’s coping abilities. Parents play an important role in teaching children how to cope with everyday stress (Power, 2004). For example, maternal support and family structure both contribute to children’s use of coping strategies (Hardy, Power, Jaedicke, 1993). It is important to examine how parents may influence children’s coping strategies because the growth of coping patterns in middle childhood may lead to stable patterns of coping into adolescence and adulthood. This influence in turn, may lead to adaptive or maladaptive coping trajectories (Compas et al., 2001).

Emotion expressiveness in the family may also contribute to children’s coping. Maternal and paternal acceptance of the child, as well as high levels of family expressiveness were associated with children’s lower perceptions of threat in response to everyday events (Kliewer, Fearn, & Walton, 1998). In another study, mothers’, but not fathers’, expression of negative emotions was negatively related to children’s use of
constructive (support and instrumental) coping strategies (Valiente, Fabes, Eisenberg, & Spinrad, 2004). Children's stress was negatively related to their constructive coping, and this relation was stronger for children exposed to low levels of parents' positive emotion (Valiente et al., 2004).

Parental beliefs about the value and danger of emotion may influence children’s coping with peer stressors. In an investigation of school-aged children’s coping with an emotionally intense event, parents’ belief that emotions are valuable predicted children’s use of emotion-oriented and support-seeking coping. Also, parents’ belief that emotions are dangerous was related to children’s use of avoidance and distraction coping (Halberstadt et al., 2006). I predicted that parents’ belief that positive and negative emotions are good would be positively related to children’s use of active coping and negatively related to children’s use of avoidance or acceptance. I predicted that parents’ belief that emotions are dangerous would be positively related to children’s use of avoidant coping. These children may avoid their feelings associated with the stressful event because in the home the experience and expression of anger and sadness is dangerous. Lastly, the more parents believe that emotions are dangerous, the less children will use active strategies for dealing with their stress.

Parental reactions to children’s expression of negative and positive emotions may influence children’s development and use of coping skills. For example, in a study of parents and their elementary school-aged children, researchers found that mothers' problem-focused reactions were positively related to children's social functioning and constructive coping, whereas mothers’ minimizing reactions were associated with lower levels of social competence and higher levels of avoidant coping (Eisenberg, et al., 1996).
In the current study, I hypothesized that parents’ supportive reactions to children’s expression of positive emotions would be associated with children’s effective coping strategies, such as active coping. Parents may cultivate positive emotions by encouraging children to be reflective about their positive experiences, which in turn will teach children to generate their own feelings of happiness, gratitude or pride. By generating positive emotions on their own, children will then be able to build their coping resources. Parents who react to children’s emotion by controlling or reprimanding children’s display may have children who may just accept or avoid the stressor. These parents may not provide children with the opportunity to use their positive emotions to develop their coping strategies. Children of parents who react in supportive ways to children’s negative emotions are predicted to use more effective coping strategies. Non-supportive reactions (e.g., punitive or minimization) to negative emotions may be associated with avoidant coping. This may be due to children not having the experience to develop an effective strategy for dealing with feelings and thoughts associated with an everyday stressor. These children may not feel as though their parent is not available to them (e.g., no support-seeking).

Family emotional climates that are rich in positive emotions may facilitate children’s development of positive emotions and adaptive coping strategies. If positive emotions broaden attention and cognition, enabling flexibility and creative thinking, they should also facilitate coping with stress (e.g., Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Parents’ emotion expressiveness in the family may also predict children’s coping with everyday stress. I predicted that parents who are positively expressive will have children who will utilize effective coping strategies (e.g., active) for dealing with every day peer stressors.
Children who learn how to express gratitude, happiness, sympathy, praise, etc. will be able to generate these emotions in themselves when they need to cope with a situation. Children who experience positive emotions in the family may be open to feeling and expressing these positive emotions which may open the door to learning new and adaptive coping strategies, as well as building personal resources and broadening their coping abilities (e.g., problem-solving versus support-seeking).

Additionally, I predicted that the more parents express negative emotion in the family, the more children who will utilize non-effective coping strategies (e.g., avoidant) for dealing with peer stressors. Children who experience a high level of negative affect in the family may learn to deal with stressors by avoiding the problem or distracting themselves in order to avoid experiencing negative affect. Negative emotions may also narrow children’s abilities to develop effective coping strategies for dealing with stress (e.g., Fredrickson, 1998).

Lastly, how parents guide children’s emotions may also influence children’s coping. Parents who believe it is their job to teach children’s emotions may be more likely to discuss children’s feelings and experiences than parents who do not believe it is their job to teach children about emotions (e.g., Duff et al., 2004). Therefore, I predicted that parents’ belief in teaching children about emotions would be positively related to children’s use of active or emotion-focused/support-seeking coping. Parents may also believe that children should learn about emotions on their own, without the support of the parent. The more parents believe that children should learn on their own, the more children would use strategies such as avoidance or acceptance to deal with stressors.
These children may have not developed the skills necessary to cope with their feelings and may therefore, give up or avoid the situation.

Developmental Period: Pre-adolescence

The current study focused on children in middle school because, as with other areas of child development, children are developing a wide variety of skills in emotion expression, understanding and knowledge, as well as experiencing a variety of novel situations. The ways in which emotions are expressed are increasingly differentiated as children get older (Saarni, 1999). Preschool-aged children have a good understanding of basic emotions, such as happy or sad and by three and a half years of age, and they have a partial understanding of complex emotions such as pride and embarrassment (e.g., Bosacki & Moore, 2004; Lewis, Sullivan, Stanger & Weiss, 1989). Complex or self-conscious emotions require a sense of self and of others and by middle childhood, children understand both the emotion and the situation in which the emotion is evoked. Emotions such as pride and embarrassment involve the ability to self-evaluate against internalized standards of behavior (Lewis et al., 1989; Saarni, 1999). Children’s understanding of emotions is important for their social adjustment in school (Cassidy, Werner, Rourke, Zubernis & Balaraman, 2003). Understanding complex emotions may provide children with the ability to cope with feelings and conflict in peer relationships.

Furthermore, by elementary-school age, children become aware that the emotions they express in public do not need to match the emotions they actually feel (Saarni, 1999). Children begin to learn how to manage their emotions, which may lead to masking true emotions and expressing less genuine feelings. This may be adaptive in the peer world. For example, masking one’s happiness over beating a friend in chess for the third
time in the face of the friend’s sadness and frustration may be adaptive; regulating expression of happiness and pride may maintain harmony in the friendship. This developmental accomplishment provides support for the current study’s plan to explore children in middle childhood’s display rule knowledge and goals.

Children’s emotion regulation develops rapidly in the preschool and elementary years (Murphy, Eisenberg, Fabes, Shepard & Guthrie, 1999). Lack of regulation is more of a problem for older than younger children, possibly because children in middle childhood may have more experiences with their own emotions, of which they need to both understand and manage. Although older children are less likely to express feelings of sadness and pain than younger children, they are more likely to expect more negative interpersonal responses to their emotional displays (Zeman & Garber, 1996). This indicates that older children may have an increased awareness of emotional scripts and display rules in conjunction with social roles.

Cognitive abilities are also developing during the age period of pre-adolescence, such as perspective taking, planning and skills in self-awareness become more fully developed. In addition, marked advances occur in the ability to retrieve information and use it to solve problems or cope with new situations (Eccles, 1999). Older children are more likely than younger children to use a broader range of coping strategies when dealing with stressors and may be better able to articulate their feelings and the strategies they use in order to cope with them (Donaldson et al., 2000; McDowell et al., 2002). These developmental competencies provide children with the necessary tools to utilize a broad array of coping strategies.
Children in this age period have also experienced the transition to middle school of which, adds an additional layer of interest and complexity when exploring this population. Experiences in middle school, beginning at age 11, may result in changes in self-esteem and competence beliefs, as well as school self-concept and intrinsic motivation (Wigfield & Eccles, 1994; Zanobini & Usai, 2002). This experience of middle school, whether positive or negative, will likely increase the number of peer stressors in children’s lives due to making new friends, adjusting to settings, and changing from class to class. Peer sexual harassment is also more likely in middle school than elementary school (American Association of University Women, 1993). Children may be exposed to a variety of novel peer situations and emotional experiences and will need to further develop their social skills and coping strategies for dealing with any stressors. For example, in a sample of Canadian students making the transition to middle school, peer acceptance was less stable during the transition than subsequently. Girls experienced greater instability in reciprocated friendships than did boys, although girls and boys had similar numbers of reciprocated friendships overall (Hardy, Bukowski & Sippola, 2002). During this process of friendship formation, stressful experiences with peers are likely to emerge.

Gender Differences

Gender differences may appear in the type of strategy children use to cope with everyday stressors. For example, boys have been found to engage in more wishful thinking than girls; girls have shown a stronger preference for support-seeking strategies in response to peer and academic stressors than do boys (Preuss & Dubow, 2004; Stark, Spirito, Willliams & Guevremont, 1989). I investigated whether or not girls and boys
differed in their use of support-seeking, active, avoidant and acceptance coping strategies. I predicted that girls would utilize more support-seeking and active strategies than would boys (e.g., Losoya et al., 1998).

Children’s gender may also influence the emotion socialization process. In mutual emotional exchanges, girls are more likely to talk about emotional aspects of experiences and convey positive emotions, and are also less likely to communicate anger, in comparison to boys (Brody & Hall, 1993; Fivush, Brotman, Buckner & Goodman, 2000; Garner, Robertson & Smith, 1997). Additionally, girls have been found to express fewer negative emotions when receiving an unattractive gift than boys do (Cole, 1986), which provides evidence that girls may be more likely to utilize display rules than boys. I predicted that girls would have more knowledge for positive emotions than boys, as well as more use of prosocial reasoning than boys. All of these studies are with European-American children and it is important to note that cultural differences may emerge when exploring these relations in other populations.

Parents’ expression of emotion may also vary depending on children’s gender. For example, mothers sometimes reported expressing more positive emotion in the presence of their girls than of their boys (Garner et al., 1997). In addition, relations between parental reactions to children’s emotions and children’s social functioning are usually significant more frequently for same-sex dyads rather than mixed-sex dyads (e.g., Isley, O’Neil, Clatfelter, & Parke, 1999). Mothers’ reactions to children’s emotions appeared to only influence daughters’ social competence (as measured by teacher and peer ratings) rather than sons’ social competence (McDowell et al., 2002).
Based on the aforementioned, I investigated whether or not child gender moderates the relationships between parents’ self-reported behaviors and children’s display rules. The relationship among parents’ positive expressivity and children’s display rule knowledge may differ depending on the gender of child. I was predicted that parental positive expressivity and parental reactions to positive emotions would be related to better display rule knowledge for girls, but not for boys.

Specific Aims

In the present investigation, I examined the processes by which parents’ beliefs about children’s emotions, parental emotion expressiveness and reactions to children’s emotions relate to children’s knowledge of display rules (both self-report and observation) and children’s self-reported coping with peer stressors.

The first aim was to determine if parents’ beliefs about children’s emotions predicted parents’ self-reported emotion-related behaviors (expressivity and reactions). I predicted that a) parents’ beliefs that positive emotions are good would be positively related to parents’ supportive reactions (e.g., encouraging) to children’s expression of positive emotions; b) parents’ beliefs that positive emotions are dangerous would be related to parents’ non-supportive reactions (e.g., reprimand); c) parents’ belief that negative emotions are good would be positively related to parents’ encouragement of children’s negative emotions; d) parents’ belief that negative emotions are dangerous would positively related to parents’ non-supportive reactions to children’s negative emotions; e) parents’ belief that positive emotions are good would be positively associated with parents’ positive expressiveness; f) parents’ belief that negative emotions are good would be positively related to parents’ negative emotion expressiveness; g)
parents’ belief that parents’ should teach their children would be positively related to parents’ positive expressiveness; h) parents’ belief that children can learn on their own would be positively related to parents’ negative emotion expressiveness.

The second aim was to explore the relationships among parents’ beliefs and self-reported emotion-related behaviors and children’s coping and display rule knowledge.

For children’s coping, I predicted that: a) parents’ beliefs that positive and negative emotions are good would be positively related to children’s use of active coping and negatively related to children’s use of avoidance or acceptance; b) parents’ belief that emotions are dangerous would be positively related to children’s use of avoidant coping and negatively related to children’s active coping strategies; c) parents’ supportive reactions to children’s expression of positive and negative emotions would be associated with active and support-seeking coping; d) parents’ non-supportive reactions to children’s positive and negative emotions would be positively related to children’s use of acceptance or avoidance coping strategies; e) parents’ positive emotion expressiveness would be positively associated with children’s use of effective coping strategies (e.g., active); f) parents’ negative emotion expressiveness would be positively related to children’s use of non-effective coping strategies (e.g., avoidant); g) parents’ belief in teaching children about emotions would be positively related to children’s use of active or emotion-focused/support-seeking coping; h) parents’ belief that children should learn on their own would be positively related to children’s avoidance or acceptance coping.

For children’s display rule knowledge and goals, I predicted that: a) parents’ belief that positive emotions are good would be positively related to children’s knowledge for positive emotions and prosocial reasoning; b) parents’ belief that negative
emotions are good would be related to children’s knowledge for negative emotions and prosocial reasoning; c) parents’ supportive reactions (teaching and encouragement) to children’s expression of positive emotions would be positively related to children’s knowledge of display rules for positive emotions, as well as prosocial goals for display rule use; d) parents’ non-supportive reactions to children’s positive emotions would be negatively related to children’s knowledge and positively related to self-protective reasons for display rule use; e) parents’ encouraging reactions to children’s negative emotions would be positively associated with children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions and endorsement of prosocial reasons; f) parents’ non-supportive reactions, in the form of punishment, distress, and minimization, would be negatively related to children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions and positively related to self-protective reasons; g) parents’ positive emotion expressiveness would be related to children’s prosocial reasoning; h) parents’ negative emotion expressiveness would be related to children’s self-protective reasoning.

The third aim was to examine if parents’ reactions and expressivity mediated the relationship among parental beliefs about children’s emotions and children’s coping and display rule knowledge and use. As per Eisenberg et al.’s (1998) model of socialization, I predicted that parents’ beliefs would be related to their emotion-related behaviors and, in turn, these self-reported emotion-related behaviors would be related to children’s everyday coping and display rule knowledge.

The fourth aim was to investigate whether or not child gender moderates the relationships between parents’ behaviors and children’s display rule knowledge and use. I predicted that parental positive expressivity and reactions to positive emotions would be
related to more knowledge and use of display rules for girls. I do not expect this relationship for boys. I also predicted that parents’ negative expressivity and reactions to negative emotions would be related to boys’ display rule knowledge and reasoning.

The **fifth aim** was to examine associations between children’s knowledge of display rules and their actual behavior during a live situation in which they must use a socially appropriate display rule. I predicted that children who report knowledge of display rules for positive emotions, via self-reported responses to vignettes, would demonstrate appropriate display rule during the live peer competition.
Method

Participants

Participants were 113 6th graders (52 girls and 61 boys, $M$ age = 11.55 years, $SD = .64$) and 83 of their parents (63 mothers, 17 fathers and 3 unknown, $M$ age = 39.01 years, $SD = 6.06$), recruited from two schools from a rural county in NC. Parents reported their ethnicities as: African American (26%), European American (70%) and Hispanic (4%). The majority of parents were married (66%). Most parents had completed high school or begun college (64%), or had completed college (30%); 6% had begun but not completed high school.

Measures

Parental Beliefs about Children’s Emotion (PBACE; Halberstadt, et al, 2005.). Parents responded to a questionnaire assessing parental beliefs, using a Likert-like scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) (see Appendix A). Previous factor analyses based on a sample of 1108 parents (489 fathers, 597 mothers, and 22 for whom the relationship was no specified) from three different ethnicities (African American, European American and Lumbee Native American) revealed four scales for the dimension of Value: Positive Emotions are Good, Negative Emotions are Good, Emotions Just Are and All Emotions are Bad. No specific hypotheses were made for the Emotions Just Are subscale and therefore, it was not included in analyses. Additionally, the All Emotions are Bad subscale was divided into two theoretically distinct subscales: Positive Emotions are Dangerous and Negative Emotions are Dangerous. It is possible that these beliefs may lead to different parent behaviors, as well as children’s peer outcomes, as hypothesized above.
Therefore, the present study included the following four subscales for Value:

Positive emotions are good (10 items, “It is important for children to be proud of a job well done.”, $\alpha = .90$); Negative emotions are good (11 items, “It is good for children to let their anger out.”, $\alpha = .88$); Negative emotions are dangerous (9 items, “Children's feelings can get hurt if they show too much of their emotions”, $\alpha = .88$); and Positive emotions are dangerous (3 items, “When children are too happy, they can get out of control.”, $\alpha = .82$).

Initial construct validity of preliminary versions of the value subscales has been promising, including associations with mothers’ and children’s implicit and explicit judgments of conflict, as well as children’s coping following a stressful event (Dunsmore, Halberstadt, Parker, Omar & Beale, 2006; Halberstadt et al., 2006). In the current study, inter-correlations between these four subscales revealed a negative relationship between parents’ beliefs that negative emotions are good and negative emotions are dangerous, $r = -.33, p < .05$, as well as a positive relationship between negative emotions are dangerous and positive emotions are dangerous, $r = .48, p < .05$. The relationship between parents’ beliefs that positive emotions are good and positive emotions are dangerous was not significant, $r = -.18, p > .05$, nor was the relationship between parents’ beliefs that negative emotions are good and positive emotions are good, $r = .16, p > .05$.

Guidance includes two subscales: Parents need to guide their children about emotion (11 items, “Parents need to teach children about the right time and place to express emotions”, $\alpha = .92$), and Children can manage emotions on their own (8 items, “Children learn how to express their feelings, even without parents helping them”, $\alpha = .89$). Construct validity of preliminary versions of the guidance subscales has been
suggested by positive associations found between mothers’ beliefs about guiding children’s emotions and mothers’ judgments about how other parents and other people’s children ought to behave in conflict (Dunsmore, et al., 2006). In the current study, parents guiding children and children learning on their own subscales were negatively correlated, $r = -.28, p < .05$.

*Self-Expression within the Family Questionnaire (SEFQ; Halberstadt et al., 1995).* The SEFQ was designed to measure the frequency of an individual’s emotional expressiveness in the family context (see Appendix B). Parents report their individual levels of expressiveness in their current families. The SEFQ consists of 40 hypothetical scenarios that are intended to represent a range of emotions found in a variety of family settings. Participants reported the frequency of events like, “Expressing gratitude for a favor” and “Quarreling with a family member” within the family context (Halberstadt et al., 1995). Respondents use a 9-point Likert scale, ranging from not at all frequently (1) to very frequently (9). Mean scores were computed for each scale. Alphas for the positive and negative subscales were .90 and .87, respectively. Construct validity has been established in a wide variety of contexts (see Halberstadt et al., 1999 for a review); for example, maternal observations and reports of negative expressivity were consistently positively related to children’s expression of facial distress/sadness (Valiente et al., 2004).

Although the negative subscale can be further subdivided into negative dominance and submissive subscales, no hypotheses about these subscales were generated. Preliminary analyses suggested similar outcomes for both subscales. Therefore, the collapsed subscale for negative expressiveness was utilized.
**Coping with Children's Negative Emotions Scale (CCNES; Fabes, Eisenberg, & Bernzweig, 1990).** The CCNES is a self-report measure of assessing behaviors that parents use in helping children to cope with their negative emotional states (see Appendix C). Parents respond to 12 hypothetical vignettes, each depicting a child reacting negatively in a specific situation. For each vignette, there are six possible responses and parents rate how likely they would be to respond in that particular way along a scale ranging from (1) very unlikely to (7) very likely. These six responses correspond to the six subscales for the questionnaire, three of which are supportive of children’s feelings: Problem-Focused (PF, “Help my child think of places he/she hasn't looked yet”); Emotion-Focused (EF, “Distract my child by talking about happy things”); and Expressive Encouragement (EE, “Tell him/her it's ok to cry when you feel unhappy”) and three of which are non-supportive of children’s feelings: Minimization Reactions (MR, “Tell my child not to make big deal of the shot”), Punitive Reactions (PR, “Tell my child to straighten up or we'll go home right away”), and Distress Reactions (DR, “Feel uncomfortable and embarrassed myself”). No hypotheses were generated for Problem-Focused and Emotion-Focused Reactions and they were not included in any analyses. Mean scores were obtained for each subscale. In Fabes et al. (2002), the alpha coefficients ranged from .69 to .85 for the six subscales. Interrelations with the CCNES and other parental measures (e.g., Interpersonal Reactivity Index and Parental Control Scale) demonstrated that the CCNES is a valid measure (Fabes et al., 2002). For example, parents’ self-reported empathic concern and perspective taking, as measured by the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, were positively related to parents’ emotion-focused, problem-focused and expressive encouragement (Fabes et al., 2002), but negatively
related to minimization reactions. Additionally, significant relationships were found between subscales of the Parental Control Scale (Harsh, Firm and Lax) and subscales of the CCNES (Fabes et al., 2002). For the current study, the alpha coefficients were .55, .72, .80, and .77 for Distress, Punitive, Encouragement, and Minimization.

*Parental Reactions to Children’s Expression of Positive Emotions (PRCPS; Ladouceur, Reid, & Jacques, 2002).* Parents responded to a variety of scenarios and then chose from options as to how they would react in this situation (see Appendix D). The PRCPS includes 12 scenarios thought to elicit positive affect in children (e.g., winning a competition, getting a new puppy, or playing with friends). For each scenario, there are four possible responses and parents rated themselves for how likely they would be to respond in that particular way along a scale ranging from (1) very unlikely to (7) very likely. The scenarios are accompanied by four parental reactions: Teach/Control (“Tell my child that he may not jump on his/her seat because it bothers other spectators”); Encouragement (“Smile to let my child know that I am happy to see he is enjoying himself”); Reprimand (“Tell my child to sit and calm down”); Discomfort (“Be embarrassed by my child’s behavior”). Each PRCPS subscale had satisfactory internal consistency (range = .72 to .88) and high temporal stability (Ladouceur et al., 2002). Test-retest correlations ranged from .60 to .79 over six weeks. Additionally, relations were found between these subscales and the SEFQ, CCNES and Family Environment scales, suggesting preliminary construct validity for the PRCPS (Ladoceur et al., 2002). For example, mothers who feel discomfort and reprimand their children for their positive emotions tend to express negative emotions in the family. Additionally, family environments that were perceived as controlling had mothers who were more likely to
reprimand their children’s expression of positive emotions (Ladouceur et al., 2002). In the current study, alpha coefficients were .71, .72, .80 and .74 for teach/control, encouragement, discomfort and reprimand, respectively.

Demographics. Parents were asked to indicate their age, gender, ethnicity, education, current employment, marital status, family composition including number of children and age and gender of the target child, and area of residence (urban, rural, or suburban) (see Appendix E).

Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced (COPE; Carver, Scheirer, & Weintraub, 1989). This measure is a multi-dimensional coping inventory used to assess the different ways in which people respond to stress. Although developed with a sample of college undergraduate students, the COPE has been used with other age groups (e.g., adolescents, Phelps & Jarvis, 1994). It requires respondents to think of a recent stressful situation with their peers, which occurred in the past two months, and to rate their use of coping behaviors in response to that event. Children were asked to report what happened, where and when it happened, who was involved and what made the event important. Children were prompted with the following “We are trying to find out how people deal with different problems and stresses with their peers. Think about a situation with your peers that has bothered you during the last 2 months. Please describe the situation.” (see Appendix F). The strength of this measure is that it allows children to spontaneously generate the peer problem they are experiencing rather than forcing them to respond to a generic or scripted stressor. Allowing children to generate their own stressors may lead to a better understanding of the wide range of stressors that children encounter. Phelps and
Jarvis (1994) found high internal reliability and good construct validity for the COPE subscales with adolescents.

Children indicate on a 4-point scale (1 = very little; 4 = a great deal) a) how much the situation mattered to them, and b) how much control they felt they had over the situations. Children were then asked to indicate the degree to which they used 26 coping strategies in dealing with the peer-related stressor using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = I didn’t do this at all; 4 = I did this a lot). Factor analyses for the current study identified 5 factors: Support-seeking (e.g., “I got help and advice from other people”, $\alpha = .73$); Humor (e.g., “I made jokes about it”, $\alpha = .71$); Active (e.g., “I took action to try to make the situation better”, $\alpha = .61$); Acceptance (e.g., “I accepted the reality of the fact that it happened”, $\alpha = .60$), and Avoidance (e.g., “I refused to believe that it had happened”, $\alpha = .73$). Subscales were created by averaging ratings across the number of items per subscale (see Results section for detailed description of exploratory factor analysis).

**Display rules for positive and negative emotions.** Children’s display rules were measured through self-report and observation. First, children’s display rule knowledge for positive and negative emotions was assessed from responses to six different hypothetical situations (three negative and three positive) in which it would be appropriate for children to use display rules (see Appendix G). The first four vignettes were adapted from McDowell and Parke (2000) and the fifth from Shipman et al. (2003), all for use with elementary school-aged children. The last vignette was created based on discussions with middle school-aged children, as follows: During the summer, a focus group of seven school-aged children was conducted. These children were asked a variety of questions about where and when it was okay to express or mask positive and negative
emotions. Children in the focus group discussed that if someone wins a prize or gets a good grade around someone who did not, he/she should not brag about it or express a lot of happiness or pride. They believed that expressing those emotions could hurt someone else’s feelings or elicit teasing from other students. Their responses guided the creation of the positive emotion vignette, “Good Grade”, used in the current study.

Past researchers have utilized graduate and/or undergraduate students to identify the appropriate emotions for each vignette (e.g., Garner, 1996; Jones et al., 1998; McDowell & Parke, 2000). However, it makes more sense to discuss with children in middle childhood what is appropriate to feel and show in the vignettes, especially if these children are the population of interest. Therefore, before the study began, a group of 10 children, ranging in age from 10 to 12 years of age, were asked to identify which emotions the characters in the vignettes would feel and show. All children correctly identified the appropriate feelings for all vignettes. However, differences emerged in terms of children’s knowledge and goals for these display rules.

In the current study, for each of the vignettes, an interviewer asked the participant to indicate how the child in the story would feel, given the situation. Additionally, each participant was asked to indicate how the child’s face would look and why the child would look that way. Interviewers used the response choices presented in Appendix G for children’s responses.

Similar to Jones et al., (1998) and McDowell & Parke (2000), display rule knowledge was assessed using a coding system that assigns points for children’s use of display rules. After each vignette, the child was asked to indicate the character’s internal emotional response and external emotional expression. A child was given 2 points for
using a correct display rule (replacing a felt emotion with a socially appropriate one). For example, in the first vignette in the Appendix, the boy received a gift he did not like. If the child selected the internal feeling as disappointed or angry and the external facial expression as happy or neutral, the child was assigned a score of 2. A child was given 1 point for using a display rule that did not utilize an appropriate social response. For example, the child may indicate a modification of an internal state but may not select the appropriate social response or emotion congruent with the story. For example, in another vignette, the girl receives a high grade on her test when her friend does not. If the child selected the internal feeling of proud and selected the expression of embarrassment, rather than the appropriate response as surprise or neutral, he/she received one point. A child received zero points for not utilizing any display rule (no distinction between internal feeling and external expression).

To ensure the stability of coding the responses, 20% of the interviews were selected at random and coded by two observers. A good level of inter-rater reliability was achieved, \( \kappa = .80 \). Scores were separately summed for display rule knowledge in the positive emotion vignettes and in the negative emotion vignettes, following McDowell & Parke (2000).

Children were also asked why they would endorse a particular expression given the situation and these reasons were also assessed. Each response that received one or two points for display rule knowledge was rated as either:

1. Prosocial: The character was concerned for the other’s feelings, for example, “She might get her feelings hurt.”
2. Self-protective: The character was concerned about staying out of trouble or avoiding ridicule or punishment, for example, “So he won’t get in trouble.”

A good level of inter-rater reliability was achieved for children’s reasoning, $\kappa = .92$, on 20% of the interviews that were selected at random and coded by two observers. Therefore, in the analyses, four display rule variables were examined: Children’s knowledge for display rules for positive emotions; children’s knowledge for display rules for negative emotions; children’s prosocial reasons and children’s self-protective reasons. Interrelations among children’s knowledge and goals are presented in the preliminary analyses section.

*Jar estimation task.* An observational measure assessed children’s use of socially appropriate display rules. Children’s baseline reactions were videotaped at the start of the interview session. It is important to first establish children’s general or baseline level of positive affect prior to winning and receiving praise during a competition with a peer. Each child was asked to estimate the number of gumballs in a jar. Each child was told that they guessed within 5 gumballs of the correct amount and was praised for doing so. This provided an opportunity to observe children’s general level of positive affect during a pleasant experience.

At the end of the interview session, each child was brought to a separate room with another child for the observational assessment of display rule use. The experimenter told the pair that they would have *one* opportunity to win one of the prizes (wrapped in shiny paper) sitting on a nearby table. They were told that they would have to compete against one another in order to win. The experimenter then presented a jar of marbles (which was previously hidden from view) to both children. Each child wrote down a
Sixty-eight children participated in the jar estimation task and thirty-four children were observed as the winners of the estimation task. Some of the study’s participants did not participate in the jar estimation portion of the task due to late IRB approval for this particular addition, and time and space constraints at the school site. Five (out of thirty-
four) dyads were not coded due to camera malfunction (e.g., stopped taping midway) or the participants’ actions (child getting out of chair and out of camera view). Therefore, twenty-nine children’s responses (15 boys and 14 girls) were coded.

Each segment of the baseline and jar estimation paradigm was videotaped and children’s affective reactions were coded by trained coders using adapted coding systems from Eisenberg, Fabes, Guthrie, Murphy, Maszk, Holgren et al. (1996) and Hubbard (2001). Children’s responses to being praised and awarded a prize in the presence of a losing peer may reflect their ability to use display rules in this type of situation.

Children’s intensity of expression of positive emotions was coded during the baseline and peer jar estimation competition. Both the children’s baseline and peer estimation reactions were coded using 1 second as the coding unit. The coder scored the children on the intensity of the expression of positive emotion (e.g., excitement, pride, happiness) with a 5-point coding system (1 = no display of emotion; 5 = strong display of emotion) (Eisenberg et al., 1996; Hubbard, 2001). For example, children received an intensity score of 2 when they gave a tight-lipped smile but no widening of eyes or laughter. Children received an intensity score of 3 when they smiled with teeth, widened their eyes and giggled lightly. Children received an intensity score of 4 when they gave a big smile, wide eyes, hands to mouth (in some cases) and a lot of laughing. Finally, children received an intensity score of 5 when they exhibited all behaviors associated with a score of 4, but they also cheered loudly (“Yes!”; “I knew I was right!”), clapped their hands together, hi-fived their partner or interviewer or jumped out of the chair. For each second of children’s expression of positive emotion, coders rated children’s intensity of that affect. Children’s average intensity scores were then created for both the
baseline and competition. A good level of inter-rater reliability was achieved for children’s displays of positive affect, \( \kappa = .82 \), on 20% of the observations that were selected at random and coded by two observers.

Children’s behaviors when receiving and opening the gift were also coded. One composite score was given to children’s gift-opening behaviors. Coders scored children’s behavior as they received the gift on a 4-point system: 1 = does not open or plays with unopened gift, 2 = opens gift when given option (after 10s delay), 3 = asks to open the gift immediately, 4 = opens gift immediately without asking.

After the task was finished, children were asked separately to rate their partner on likeability and closeness. Children indicated on 4-point scales how much they liked playing with their partner (1 = very little; 4 = a great deal) and how close they are with that partner (1 = not very close; 4 = very close).

**Procedure**

Letters were sent to teachers at two elementary schools and a total of four teachers (two at each school) agreed to assist. Letters and consent forms were given to teachers to pass on to children to take home to their parents. Children were invited to participate in a Science Day in their classrooms and parents were invited to complete a packet of questionnaires on their parenting beliefs and behaviors.

Thirty (out of 113) parents did not complete the parent packets. The majority of incomplete packets (approximately 20) were from the first recruited middle school. The reason for the lack of compliance may be due to parent time, need for more in-depth explanation of study to parents, or teacher-parent relationships. Teachers at the second
middle school were able to talk to parents at parent-teacher conferences about our study, and also the teachers encouraged children to return the completed packets.

Four sixth-grade classes participated in a Science Day learning module that consisted of two sections: an activity center and a research center (see Thompson & Halberstadt, 2006 for more detail). Children with parental consent participated in both activity and research centers and were introduced to concepts of scientific literacy. Children without consent participated only in the activity center. The activity center involved teaching children perceptual and cognitive psychology concepts such as optical illusions and the Stroop Color Task. The research center allowed children to participate in social developmental research, including interviews and challenging games. At the start of each class period, the research team introduced themselves to the classroom. The teacher then identified those children with consent to participate (via signed consents on their desks). Children with consent (approximately six at a time) were then escorted to a separate room by the research team. The remaining children participated in the activity center. When the children with consent were finished with the research center interviews and tasks, they were escorted back to their classroom. At this point, if any children remained that had consent to participate, this new set of children were escorted to the research center to be interviewed.

Children who were given permission by a parent to participate in the current study were taken individually to a quiet, separate room with one of five trained undergraduate or graduate interviewers who were blind to the hypotheses for this study. First, interviewers described the study, obtained child assent, and then conducted the baseline measure for the jar estimation task. Second, the interviewers proceeded with the
interviews about peer (COPE and display rule knowledge vignettes) and sibling (Ideas about Relationships, COPE, sibling vignettes and sibling jealousy inventory) relationships, in counter-balanced order. All interviews were videotaped. At the end of the interview, children were paired up with a classmate to participate in two games, one of which was the jar estimation task. After the games, each child was escorted back to the research center by the interviewer and was offered a second research activity. Children took packets home for the parents to complete. When children returned the completed packet back to school, the family received $20 as compensation for their time or the money was donated to the 6th grade classroom fund.

Table 1

Organization of Parent and Child Measures

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<th>Construct</th>
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<td>Parents’ Beliefs about Children’s Emotions</td>
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<td>Parents’ Emotion Expressiveness</td>
<td>SEFQ</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ Reactions to Children’s Negative Emotions</td>
<td>CCNES</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ Reactions to Children’s Positive Emotions</td>
<td>PRCPS</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ Background Information</td>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Coping with Peer Stress</td>
<td>COPE</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Knowledge for Display Rules</td>
<td>Display Rule Vignettes</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Use of Display Rules</td>
<td>Jar Estimation</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>After interview session with peer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

Overview

First, I present descriptive statistics and preliminary analyses (including data reduction) for the measures used in later analyses. Second, I report the results relating to the goals in Aim 1, exploring the relations between parents’ beliefs and their self-reported emotion-related behaviors. Third, I report the results relating to the goals in Aim 2, assessing the relationship between parents’ beliefs and behaviors and children’s coping and display rule knowledge. Fourth, I report results pertaining to Aim 3, exploring the mediational pathways from parent beliefs to self-reported behaviors to children’s outcomes. I will then present the findings on the moderation analyses (Aim 4), in which child gender moderated the relation between parents’ reactions to children’s emotions and children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning. Lastly, I discuss results relating to children’s display rules during an observational task (Aim 5).

Data Reduction

Children’s coping. Ninety-nine children generated a peer stressor (14 children reported no peer stressor) and reported their strategies for coping. Their coping responses to these peer stressors were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis. To determine the number of factors to extract, I used the scree test, incremental variance explained, and interpretability of the factors. Based on these criteria, five meaningful factors appeared to be the best factor solution. Principal axis factoring method was used to extract the factors and this was followed by promax (oblique) rotation.

A factor analysis forcing five factors was conducted. Five items were dropped from the factor analysis because these items cross-loaded on other factors or did not load
onto any factor above .40 (see Table 2). In interpreting the pattern matrix, an item was said to load on a given factor if the loading was .40 or greater for that factor. Based on this, four items were found to load on the first factor labeled ‘support-seeking’. Two items were found to load on the second factor, which was labeled ‘humor’. Four items loaded on the third factor labeled ‘active’. Four items loaded on the fourth factor labeled ‘acceptance’. Lastly, three items loaded on the fifth factor, which was labeled avoidance. Questionnaire items and the corresponding factors and factor loadings are presented in Table 2. Subscales were created by averaging ratings across the numbers of items per subscale. Internal reliability was acceptable with alpha coefficients ranged from .58 to .73 (see Table 2). Means and standard deviations for each coping subscale are reported in Table 4.

As a side note, the factors used by Washburn-Ormachea et al. (2004) and Phelps and Jarvis (1994) were not used in the current study. A factor analysis attempting the same factor structure of the above researchers did not provide factors that made conceptual sense for the current study. Instead, the aforementioned factor analyses produced the best 5-factor solution. There were two differences in coping strategies used by 8th and 9th graders in the Washburn-Ormachea et al. (2004) study and those used by 6th graders in the current study. First, in the current study, support-seeking was one factor; in the adolescent study, these items were split into two factors (active and emotion-focused coping). Second, in the current study, humor emerged as its own factor; in the adolescent study, humor was part of the acceptance coping factor. These differences are further explored in the discussion section.
### Table 2

**Variable Loadings on COPE Factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors and Items</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Percent of Variance Explained</th>
<th>Alpha (α)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1: Support-Seeking</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I got comfort and understanding from someone.</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>16.71%</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I tried to get advice and help from other people about what to do.</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I got help and advice from other people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I got emotional support from others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2: Humor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.52%</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I made fun of the situation.</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I made jokes about it.</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3: Active</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.36%</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I concentrated my efforts on doing something about the situation I was in.</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I took action to try to make the situation better.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I tried to come up with a strategy about what to do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I thought hard about what steps to take.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 4: Acceptance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.97%</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I accepted the reality of the fact that it happened.</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I gave up the attempt to cope.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I learned to live with it.</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I did something to think about it less.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 5: Avoidance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.43%</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I said to myself “this isn’t real”.</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I refused to believe that it had happened.</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I pretended that it didn’t really happen.</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Five items that cross-loaded or had factor loadings less than .40 were omitted.*

**Preliminary Analyses for Parent and Child Measures**

The means and standard deviations for parents’ beliefs, reactions to children’s positive and negative emotions, as well as emotion expressiveness are presented in Table 3. Parents’ demographic variables (gender, ethnicity, age, and education) were correlated with parents’ beliefs, expressiveness, and reactions. Parent gender, ethnicity, and education were not related to any of the 14 parents’ beliefs or self-reported behaviors. However, parent age was related to a few parent beliefs and reactions.
**Table 3**

*Means and Standard Deviations for Parents’ Emotion-Related Beliefs and Behaviors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ beliefs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value: Positive emotion</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danger: Positive emotion</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value: Negative emotion</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danger: Negative emotion</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance: Parents teach children</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance: Children learn on their own</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ Reactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive: Teach/Control</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive: Encouragement</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive: Discomfort</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive: Reprimand</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative: Distress</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative: Punitive</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative: Encouragement</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative: Minimization</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ Expressiveness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Range for Parents’ Beliefs = 1-6; Range for Parents’ Reactions = 1-7; Range for Parents’ Expressiveness = 1-9.*

Parent age was positively correlated with parents’ belief that children learn on their own, $r = .24, p < .05$, with parents’ discomfort reactions to children’s positive emotions, $r = .31, p < .01$, and with parents’ punishing reactions to children’s negative emotions, $r = .25, p < .05$. Because parent gender, education, and ethnicity had no impact on any of the parent dependent variables, they were dropped from further analyses; parent age was, however, retained as a potential covariate in parents’ reactions to children’s emotions analyses.

Relationships among parent demographic variables and children’s outcomes were also examined. Parent education was related to children’s support-seeking coping, $r = -.27, p < .05$, and use of humor, $r = .31, p < .05$. Parent education was not related to
children’s display rule knowledge or reasoning. Because parent gender, ethnicity and age were not related to any of the nine children’s outcome variables, they were dropped from further analyses; parent education was, however, retained as a potential covariate in children’s coping analyses. Additionally, parent education may play a role in children’s use of coping strategies (e.g., Kliwer, Parrish, Taylor, Jackson, Walker & Shivy, 2006), which makes it important to explore its relationship with coping, along with parents’ emotion-related beliefs and behaviors.

Child gender also correlated with children’s perceptions of stress, coping strategies, and display rule knowledge and reasoning. Boys and girls differed in their perceptions of importance and control of the reported stressors (see Table 4). Girls reported that the situation mattered more to them than did boys, $F(1, 98) = 7.86, p < .01$, whereas boys reported more control over the stressful situation than girls, $F(1, 98) = 3.91, p < .05$. Boys and girls significantly differed in their use of coping strategies (see Table 3 for means and standard deviations). Girls reported using more support-seeking, $F(1, 98) = 2.91, p < .05$, and less humor as coping strategies, $F(1, 98) = 5.50, p < .05$ compared to boys.

Boys and girls did not differ in their knowledge or reasoning for display rules (see Table 5). Although it appears that girls have a higher knowledge of display rules for positive emotions than boys, this gender difference was not significantly different, $F(1, 105) = 1.98, p = .16$. Boys and girls did not differ in their knowledge for negative emotions. Additionally, no gender differences existed for prosocial or self-protective reasoning. Therefore, child gender was retained as a potential covariate for children’s coping analyses, but not for children’s display rule analyses.
Table 4

*Means and Standard Deviations for Children’s Perceptions and Use of Coping Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping Strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support-Seeking</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* \(N = 99\) (Fourteen children reported that they did not experience a peer stressor). Children’s perceptions of stressors and coping strategies ranged from 1 to 4.

Table 5

*Means and Standard Deviations for Children’s Display Rule Knowledge*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosocial</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Protect</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* \(N = 106\) (Seven children did not complete the display rule vignettes due to time constraints). Children’s display rule knowledge and goals ranged from 0 to 6.

Children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions was also observed during a live peer task. The means and standard deviations for their baseline and competition intensity scores are presented in Table 6. Boys and girls did not differ in the intensity of positive affect during the baseline, \(F(1, 28) = .99, p = .32\), or during the task, \(F(1, 28) = .67, p = .42\).
A paired sample t-test was conducted to determine if children’s behavior during the jar estimation game was different from children’s behavior during the baseline. Children’s intensity scores for the baseline and competition were not significantly different from one another, $t(28) = -1.55, p = .13$. Contrary to hypotheses, children expressed more positive affect (though not significantly) during the actual jar estimation task than during the baseline, which suggests that children did not modulate their positive affect during the competition.

For children’s gift-opening behaviors, most children opened the gift when given the option by the experimenter after a period of time, $M(SD) = 2.41 (.90)$, with most children falling into this category (44%). The next largest group was children who asked to open the gift immediately after receiving the gift (27%). The next group opened the gift without waiting or asking permission (14%). The last group did not open the gift at all, despite prompts from the experimenter or peer (14%). Children reported enjoying playing with their partner, $M(SD) = 3.60 (.70)$, and being somewhat close to their partner, $M(SD) = 2.42 (.99)$.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Children’s Intensity of Positive Affect during Baseline and Jar Estimation Competition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensity</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>$2.89$</td>
<td>$.94$</td>
<td>$2.58$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>$3.14$</td>
<td>$.96$</td>
<td>$2.68$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N = 29*
Aim 1: Parents’ Beliefs Predicting Parents’ Self-reported Emotion-Related Behaviors

Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to explore if parents’ beliefs about emotions predicted parents’ reports of their reactions to children’s displays of positive and negative emotions, controlling for parent age.

Separate hypotheses were generated to explore whether or not parents’ beliefs about positive emotions would predict parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions. To test these hypotheses, parent age was entered into the first step and parents’ belief that positive emotions are good and positive emotions are dangerous were entered into the second step, predicting parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions. Parent age predicted parents’ discomfort reactions, accounting for 9% of the variance, but did not predict other parental reactions to children’s positive emotions (see Table 7). Parents’ belief that positive emotions are good did not significantly predict any of the parental reactions to children’s positive emotions. Parents’ belief that positive emotions are dangerous significantly predicted parents’ teach/control of children’s positive emotions, after controlling for age, but not any other reactions.

Separate hypotheses were generated to explore whether or not parents’ beliefs about negative emotions would predict parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions. To test these hypotheses, parent age was entered into the first step and parents’ beliefs that negative emotions are good and negative emotions are dangerous were entered into the second step. Parent age significantly predicted parents’ punitive reactions, accounting for 6% of the variance. Parents’ belief that negative emotions are good significantly predicted parents’ encouraging reactions to children’s negative emotions above and beyond parent age (see Table 8).
Table 7

Hierarchical Regression Models with Parents’ Beliefs about Value and Danger of Positive Emotion Predicting Parents’ Reactions to Children’s Positive Emotions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>Teach/Control</th>
<th>Encouragement</th>
<th>Discomfort</th>
<th>Reprimand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent age</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent age</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pos: Good</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pos: Danger</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R² change</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01
### Table 8

**Hierarchical Regression Models with Parents’ Beliefs about Goodness and Danger of Negative Emotion Predicting Parents’ Reactions to Children’s Negative Emotions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>Teach/Control</th>
<th>Encouragement</th>
<th>Discomfort</th>
<th>Reprimand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent age Step 1:</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R² change</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent age Step 2:</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neg: Good</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neg: Danger</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R² change</td>
<td>.07*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01
Contrary to hypotheses, parents’ belief that negative emotions are dangerous did not predict parents’ non-supportive reactions, in the form of distress, punishment or minimization.

Simultaneous regression analyses were conducted to explore the total and unique contributions of parents’ beliefs about children’s emotions to parental positive and negative expressiveness. Parents’ value and danger beliefs (for positive and negative emotions) were entered simultaneously in the regression equation predicting parents’ positive emotion expressiveness. The same regression equation was used to predict parents’ negative emotion expressiveness. The hypothesis that parents’ belief that positive emotions are good would be related to parents’ expression of positive emotions in the family was confirmed. The more parents believed that positive emotions are good, the more they expressed positive emotions in the home (see Table 9). Contrary to hypotheses, parents’ beliefs that negative emotions are good or negative emotions are dangerous were not related to parents’ negative expressivity.

Table 9

*Simultaneous Regression Models with Parents’ Beliefs about Value and Danger of Emotion Predicting Parents’ Emotion Expressiveness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>Positive Expressiveness</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Negative Expressiveness</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neg: Good</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.43</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.17</td>
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<td>.05</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.12*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.07</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01
Simultaneous regression analyses were utilized to explore if parents’ guidance beliefs predicted their self-reported emotion expressiveness in the family. Parents’ beliefs that parents should guide children’s emotions and children learn on their own were entered simultaneously into the regression equation. Parents’ belief that parents should guide children’s emotions predicted parents’ positive emotion expressiveness in the family (see Table 10). Additionally, parents’ belief that children should learn on their own predicted parents’ negative expressiveness in the family. These findings supported the current study’s hypotheses.

Table 10

*Simultaneous Regression Models with Parents’ Beliefs about Guidance Predicting Parents’ Emotion Expressiveness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>Positive Expressiveness</th>
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<th></th>
<th>Negative Expressiveness</th>
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</thead>
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<td>β</td>
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<td>SE</td>
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</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01

*Children’s Peer Outcomes*

Before exploring how parents relate to children’s peer outcomes, analyses within children’s coping and display rule use will be discussed first.

*Children’s peer stressors and coping.* Children’s stressful situations were classified into five categories using a content analysis. *Arguments and fights with same-sex peers* were the stressful situations reported by almost half of the children (49.60%), and included friends teasing, spreading rumors, excluding or breaking plans. An example is: “I went to a friend’s house to play and he was playing with someone else and wouldn’t...
let me come in even though he was allowed two guests at a time. I went home. He came over after his friend left but I didn’t play with him because I was mad.” Problems interacting with peer social group were the second most frequent situations reported as stressful (12.40%) and included fighting in sports, conflict between two sets of peer groups, or getting in trouble with authority figures. An example is: “Some of my friends don’t like one of my friends. It is hard to have lunch together and hang out outside of class with my friend.” Arguments and fights with or about other-sex peers were reported as the third most stressful (10.60%) and included friends disliking boy/girlfriend, friends stealing boy/girlfriend or negative other-sex interactions. An example is: “My friends say that my boyfriend is ugly but he’s nice to me. And I don’t really care what they say because it is my opinion.” Physical fights or threats from peers were reported as the fourth most frequent situation (4.80%) of children and included being shoved/kicked in the hallways or sports violence/injury. An example is: “There is a girl in another class that messes with my friends and hits them when changing classes.” Other types of incidents that did not fit into these categories (8.40%) included friend moving away, friend dying, or obeying rules at friends’ house. These frequencies were based on 99 children because 14 children (13.30%) reported that they had not experienced a stressful peer event in the past two months. An equal number of boys ($n = 7$) and girls ($n = 7$) reported not experiencing a peer stressor.

Children were asked to report how much the stressful situation mattered to them, as well as how much control they felt they had over the situation. As shown in Table 4, children reported that the stressful situation was moderately important and that
they had little to moderate control over the situation. Children’s perceptions of importance and control over the stressor were not correlated, \( r = -.15, p > .05 \).

For coping with peer stressors, children were most likely to choose acceptance and active as the most common coping strategies and humor as the least common. The frequencies for these coping strategies were not significantly different from one another. Support-seeking was positively correlated with active coping, \( r = .25, p < .05 \) and, humor was positively correlated with acceptance, \( r = .23, p < .05 \). Means and standard deviations for each coping strategy are reported in Table 4.

The relation between children’s perceptions of importance and control over the stressors and their use of coping strategies was explored. Caring about the stressful situation was positively related to children’s use of active and support-seeking coping strategies, \( r = .23 \) and \( .17, p < .05 \) and \( p < .10 \), respectively. Additionally, these children were less likely to use humor as a coping strategy when the situation mattered to them, \( r = -.24, p < .05 \). No significant relationships were found between perceptions of control and coping strategies despite hypotheses predicting that children’s perceptions of a lot of control would be positively related to greater use of active or support-seeking strategies.

*Display rules knowledge and goals.* Overall, children had more knowledge for negative emotions than positive emotions, \( t(105) = 2.04, p < .05 \) (see Table 5). Children endorsed prosocial reasoning for display rule use more than self-protective reasoning, \( t(105) = 6.74, p < .01 \). Children’s knowledge for negative emotions was positively correlated with children’s knowledge for positive emotions, \( r = .35, p < .01 \). Children’s prosocial reasoning was not correlated with self-protective reasoning, \( r = -.05, p > .05 \). Additionally, children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions was positively
correlated with children’s prosocial and self-protective reasoning, $r = .71$ and .29, $ps < .01$. Children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions was positively correlated with prosocial reasoning, $r = .77$, $p < .01$, but not with self-protective reasoning, $r = .16$, $p > .05$.

**Aim 2: Parents’ Beliefs and Emotion-Related Behaviors Predicting Children’s Coping**

Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to explore the relationships among parents’ beliefs about emotion and emotion-related behaviors and children’s coping with peer stressors. Separate sets of regression analyses were conducted for parents’ beliefs, reactions, and expressiveness. These analyses allowed for examining the total contribution, as well as the unique contribution of the parents’ beliefs, parents’ reactions, and parents’ expressiveness on children’s coping.

The first set of hierarchical regression analyses was conducted to determine if parents’ beliefs about the value and danger of emotion predicted children’s coping. Child gender and parent education were correlated with children’s coping and it was important to explore the relative contribution of parents’ beliefs above and beyond child gender and parent education. Thus, these two demographic variables were entered into the first step of the regression equation. Parents’ beliefs about the value and danger of positive and negative emotions were entered into the second step of the equation (see Table 11).

For support-seeking coping, child gender and parent education explained 10% of the variance. Parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion overall explained an additional 12% of the variance. Parents’ belief that negative emotions are dangerous was a unique predictor of children’s support-seeking coping; the more parents believe that negative emotions are dangerous, the less their children seek out support for coping with peer
stressors. Communality analyses were conducted to explore the unique and shared effects of the demographic and parents’ beliefs variables. Child gender, parent education, and parents’ beliefs about the value and danger of emotion explained 22% of the variance for support-seeking coping. Of that variance, 31% was due to child gender and parent education, 55% was due to parents’ beliefs and the remaining 14% was due to the overlap between child gender, parent education, and parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion.

For humor, child gender and parent education explained 10% of the variance. Parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion overall explained an additional 13% of the variance, above and beyond child gender and parent education. Parents’ belief that positive emotions are dangerous uniquely predicted children’s humor coping. The more parents believe that positive emotions are dangerous, the more children use humor to cope with their peer stressors. Child gender, parent education, and parents’ beliefs about the value and danger of emotion explained 23% of the variance for humor coping. Of that variance, 22% was due to child gender and parent education, 56% was due to parents’ beliefs and the remaining 22% was due to the overlap between child gender, parent education and parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion.

For active coping, child gender and parent education did not make a significant contribution. Parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion explained 11% of the variance, above and beyond child gender and parent education. Parents’ belief that negative emotions are good significantly predicted children’s use of active coping. The more parents believe that negative emotions are good, the less children use active coping to deal with their peer stressors.
For acceptance, child gender and parent education did not make a significant contribution. Parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion explained 8% of the variance, above and beyond child gender and parent education. Parents’ belief that negative emotions are good significantly predicted children’s acceptance coping strategy; the more parents believe that negative emotions are good, the more children accepted the fact that the situation happened.

For avoidant coping, child gender, parent education and parents’ beliefs about the value and danger of children’s emotions did not explain a significant amount of variance.

Overall, parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion significantly predicted children’s coping. Specifically, parents’ belief that negative emotions are dangerous was related to children’s support-seeking coping, which supports the current study’s hypotheses. Contrary to hypotheses, parents’ belief that negative emotions are good was negatively related to children’s active coping, but positively related to children’s acceptance coping. Additionally, parents’ belief that positive emotions are dangerous was related to children’s use of humor coping.

The second set of hierarchical regression analyses explored the relationships of parents’ beliefs regarding teaching children about emotion and children learning on own with children’s coping. Child gender and parent education were entered into the first step of the regression equation and parents’ beliefs were entered into the second step (see Table 12). Because the contributions of child gender and parent education have already been considered above, I only discuss the additional contribution of parents’ beliefs about guidance.
### Table 11

*Hierarchical Regression Models with Parents’ Beliefs about the Value and Danger of Emotion Predicting Children’s Coping with Peer Stressors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
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<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Avoidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>β</td>
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<td>SE B</td>
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* p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01
Table 12

Hierarchical Regression Models with Parents’ Beliefs about Guidance Predicting Children’s Coping

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
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<th>Avoidance</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>-.01</td>
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<td>.02</td>
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</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01
For support-seeking coping, parents’ guidance beliefs did not explain a significant amount of variance.

For humor coping, parents’ guidance beliefs explained 7% of the variance above and beyond child gender and parent education. Parents’ belief that children should learn on their own was a unique predictor of children’s humor coping. The more parents believe that children should learn how to deal with emotions on their own, the more children reported using humor to deal with a peer stressor. Child gender, parent education, and parents’ beliefs about the value and danger of emotion explained 17% of the variance for humor coping. Of that variance, 65% was due to child gender and parent education and 41% was due to parents’ beliefs. None was due to the overlap between child gender, parent education and parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion.

For both active and acceptance coping, parents’ guidance beliefs did not explain a significant amount of variance.

For avoidant coping, parents’ guidance beliefs explained 7% of the variance above and beyond child gender and parent education. Parents’ belief that children should learn on their own significantly predicted children’s avoidant coping. The more parents believe that children should learn on their own, the more children avoided coping with the stressful situation.

Overall, parents’ belief that children can learn on their own was positively related with both children’s humor and avoidant coping; parents’ belief in teaching children about emotion had little to no impact on children’s coping strategies.

The third set of analyses was conducted to determine if parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions predicted children’s coping, above and beyond child gender
and parent education. Child gender and parent education were entered into the first step of the regression equation to control for these variables. All four parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions (teach/control, encouragement, discomfort, reprimand) were entered into the second step of the regression equation (see Table 13). Because the contributions of child gender and parent education have already been considered above, I only discuss the additional contribution of parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions.

For support-seeking, parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions did not explain any additional variance above and beyond child gender and education.

For humor, although parents’ teaching and reprimanding reactions were correlated with children’s use of humor ($r = -.26$ & $r = -.23$, respectively), these parent reactions did not predict children’s humor coping above and beyond child gender and parent education in the regression analyses.

For both active and acceptance coping, parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions did not make any significant contributions.

Lastly, for avoidant coping, parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions explained 9% of the variance, above and beyond parent education and child gender. Parents’ teach/control reactions to children’s positive emotions uniquely predicted children’s avoidant coping. The more parents’ attempt to control children’s expression of positive emotions, the more children avoid dealing with the stressful situation.

Overall, only one parent reaction, teach/control, was related to children’s coping. That parents’ teach/control reactions were positively related to children’s use of avoidant coping supports the study’s hypotheses.
Table 13

Hierarchical Regression Models with Parents’ Reactions to Children’s Positive Emotions Predicting Children’s Coping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>Support-seeking</th>
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<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Avoidance</th>
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<td>Step 2:</td>
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<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
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</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01
The fourth set of analyses was conducted to determine if parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions were related to children’s coping. Child gender and parent education were entered in the first step. Parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions were entered into the second step (see Table 14). Because the contributions of child gender and parent education have already been considered above, I only discuss the additional contribution of parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions.

The analyses revealed only one new relationship: Parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions explained 11% of the variance for children’s humor coping, above and beyond child gender and parent education. Parents’ distressed reactions significantly predicted children’s use of humor coping; the more parents feel distress when children express negative emotions, the less children use humor to cope with peer stressors. Child gender, parent education and parents’ reaction to children’s negative emotions explained 22% of the variance in children’s humor coping. Communality analyses revealed of that variance, 41% was due to child gender and parent education, 50% was due to parents’ reactions, and 9% was due to the overlap between the child gender and parent education and parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions.

Overall, only parental distress to children’s negative emotions was associated with children’s humor coping. Parents’ encouraging and punishing reactions were not related to children’s coping and this is contrary to the current study’s hypotheses.
Table 14

Hierarchical Regression Models with Parents’ Reactions to Children’s Negative Emotions Predicting Children’s Coping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
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<td>.04</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01
The fifth set of analyses was conducted to determine if parents’ emotion expressiveness predicted children’s coping, above and beyond child gender and parent education. Child gender and parent education were entered into the first step of the regression equation. Parents’ positive and negative emotion expressiveness were entered into the second step of the regression equation (see Table 15). Because the contributions of child gender and parent education have already been considered above, I only discuss the additional contribution of parents’ emotion expressiveness.

For support-seeking coping, parents’ emotion expressiveness did not explain a significant amount of variance.

For humor coping, parents’ emotion expressiveness explained an additional 5% of the variance, above and beyond child gender and parent education. Parents’ negative emotion expressiveness was a unique predictor of children’s use of humor coping. The more parents express negative emotions in the family, the more humor children use to cope with everyday stressors. Communality analyses revealed that of that variance (15% total), 73% was due to parent education and 33% was due to parents’ emotion expressiveness. None was shared between demographics and parents’ emotion expressiveness.

For active coping, parents’ emotion expressiveness in the family explained 6% of the variance, above and beyond child gender and parent education. Parents’ negative emotion expressiveness uniquely predicted children’s active coping. The more parents express negative emotions in the family, the less children problem solve or actively seek out ways to cope with their stressful situations.
### Table 15

**Hierarchical Regression Models with Parents’ Emotion Expressiveness Predicting Children’s Coping**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Support-seeking</th>
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<td>β</td>
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<td>Parent education</td>
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<td>.18</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child gender</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent education</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative express</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive express</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∆R²</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1p < .10, \*p < .05, **p < .01\)

---

Parental Socialization

83
For acceptance and avoidance coping, parents’ emotion expressiveness did not make any significant contributions.

Overall, parents’ negative emotion expressiveness was negatively associated with children’s active coping, which supported the current study’s hypothesis. Additionally, parents’ negative emotion expressiveness was positively related to children’s humor coping. Parents’ positive emotion expressiveness did not predict any of the children’s coping strategies, contrary to hypotheses that positive expressiveness would be related to children’s use of support-seeking and active coping strategies.

*Simultaneous Regression Analyses with All Predictors of Children’s Coping*

To explore which parents’ beliefs and behaviors uniquely predicted children’s coping strategies when multiple predictors emerged in the previous analyses, simultaneous regression analyses were conducted. In the regression model predicting children’s humor coping, parent education, parents’ belief that positive emotions are dangerous, parents’ belief that children should learn on their own, parental distress, and parents’ negative expressiveness were all entered simultaneously. Together, the five variables explained 30% of the variance in children’s humor coping. Parents’ education, $\beta = .26, p < .05$, and parents’ belief that positive emotions are dangerous, $\beta = .26, p < .05$, uniquely predicted children’s humor coping.

For children’s active coping, parent education, parents’ belief that negative emotions are good, and parents’ negative emotion expressiveness were entered simultaneously into the regression equation. Together, these three variables explained 12% of the variance. Parents’ belief that negative emotions are good uniquely predicted children’s active coping, $\beta = -.25, p < .05$. 
For children’s avoidant coping, parent education, parents’ beliefs that children learn on their own, and parents’ teach/control reactions to positive emotions were entered simultaneously into the regression equation. Together, these variables explained 12% of the variance. Parents’ teaching/controlling reactions to children’s positive emotions uniquely predicted children’s avoidant coping, $\beta = .25, p < .05$.

Aim 2: Parents’ Beliefs and Self-Reported Behaviors Predicting Children’s Display Rule Knowledge and Goals

Simultaneous regression analyses were conducted to explore the total and unique contributions of parents’ beliefs on children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning. Parents’ beliefs about the goodness and danger of emotions were entered simultaneously to predict children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions. Three additional regression models were created to predict children’s knowledge for positive emotions, prosocial reasoning, and self-protective reasoning (see Table 16). In the first, second, and third models, parents’ beliefs that emotions are good and dangerous did not predict either children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions or children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions, or children’s prosocial reasoning. In the fourth model, however, parents’ belief that positive emotions are good (but not dangerous) predicted children’s use of self-protective reasoning. The more parents believe that positive emotions are good, the less children utilize self-protective reasoning when modulating their inner feelings in the presence of a peer.
Table 16

*Simultaneous Regression Models with Parents’ Beliefs about Value and Danger of Emotion Predicting Children’s Display Rule*

**Knowledge and Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents’ Beliefs</th>
<th>Negative Knowledge</th>
<th>Positive Knowledge</th>
<th>Prosocial Reasoning</th>
<th>Self-Protective Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictors:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value: Neg</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danger: Neg</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value: Pos</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danger: Pos</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01
Simultaneous regression analyses were conducted to explore the total and unique contributions of parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions to children’s display knowledge for positive emotions and children’s reasoning (see Table 17). Parents’ teach/control, encouragement, discomfort and reprimand reactions were all entered simultaneously into the regression equation. Parents’ encouraging reactions significantly predicted children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions; the more parents encouraged their children to express positive emotions, the less children utilized display rule knowledge for positive emotions. Parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions did not predict children’s prosocial or self-protective reasoning.

Table 17

*Simultaneous Regression Models with Parents’ Reactions to Children’s Positive Emotion Predicting Children’s Display Rule Knowledge*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents’ Reactions</th>
<th>Positive Knowledge</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Prosocial Reasoning</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Protective Reasoning</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictors:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach/Control</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage</td>
<td>-.56</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>-.26*</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reprimand</td>
<td>-.47</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01

The contribution of parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions to children’s display rules for negative emotions and reasoning was explored with simultaneous regression analyses (see Table 18). Parents’ reactions to negative emotions did not predict children’s knowledge for negative emotions or prosocial reasoning. However, parents’ minimizing reactions did predict children’s endorsement of self-
protective reasoning. The more parents minimize children’s negative emotions, the more children give self-protective reasons for modulating their feelings.

Table 18

*Simultaneous Regression Models with Parents’ Reactions to Children’s Negative Emotion Predicting Children’s Display Rule Knowledge*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents’ Reactions</th>
<th>Positive Knowledge</th>
<th>Prosocial Reasoning</th>
<th>Self-Protective Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>-.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punitive</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td></td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01

Simultaneous regression analyses were conducted to explore the contribution of parents’ positive and negative emotion expressiveness to children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning (see Table 19). I hypothesized that parents’ positive emotion expressivity would significantly predict children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions, as well as prosocial reasoning; however, no relationships emerged.

Additionally, I hypothesized that parents’ negative expressiveness would be associated with children’s knowledge for negative emotions and self-protective reasoning; however, no relationships emerged.
Table 19

*Simultaneous Regression Models with Parents’ Emotion Expressiveness Predicting Children’s Display Rule Knowledge and Goals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors:</th>
<th>Negative Knowledge</th>
<th>Positive Knowledge</th>
<th>Prosocial Reasoning</th>
<th>Self-Protective Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ Expressiveness</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01
Aim 3: Mediational Analyses

Based on Eisenberg et al.’s (1998) model of parental socialization of emotion, parents’ emotion-related behaviors were hypothesized to mediate the relation between parents’ beliefs and children’s coping and use of display rules. However, the steps necessary to conduct mediation were not met (see Baron & Kenny, 1986) and therefore, these analyses were not conducted.

Aim 4: Gender as a Potential Moderator of Parents’ Emotion-Related Behaviors and Children’s Display Rule Knowledge and Goals

Simultaneous regression analyses were conducted to test if gender moderated the relation between parents’ reactions to children’s positive emotions and children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions. Interaction terms were computed from the product of child gender and each of the four parental reactions to children’s positive emotions. Parental reactions (e.g., control/teach), child gender, and the interaction term were entered simultaneously into the regression equation. Children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions was the outcome variable.

The interaction between child gender and parents’ control/teaching of children’s positive emotions predicting children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions was marginally significant (see Table 20). For boys, the more parents control positive emotions, the more display rule knowledge boys have for positive emotions (see Figure 1). On the other hand, for girls, the more control that parents place on girls’ positive emotions, the less display rule knowledge girls have for positive emotions.
Table 20

Regression Model with the Interaction Between Parental Teach/Control and Child Gender Predicting Children’s Knowledge for Positive Emotions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental teaching/control</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child gender</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.27*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent teaching/control * child gender</td>
<td>-.88</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>-1.20*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² .05

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01

Figure 1

Interaction between parents’ teaching reactions and child gender predicting children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions
Gender did not moderate the relationships between parents’ discomfort, $F(3, 72) = .54, p > .05, R^2 = .02, \beta = -.28$; parents’ reprimanding reactions to positive emotions, $F(3, 72) = .63, p > .05, R^2 = .03, \beta = -.37$; and parents’ encouraging reactions, $F(3, 72) = 1.91, p > .05, R^2 = .07, \beta = .75$ and children’s knowledge for positive emotions.

Simultaneous regression analyses were conducted to test if gender moderated the relation between parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions and children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions. Interaction terms were computed from the product of child gender and each of the four parental reactions to children’s negative emotions. Parental reactions (e.g., distress), child gender, and the interaction term were entered simultaneously into the regression equation. Children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions was the outcome variable.

Parental punishing reactions to children’s negative emotions predicted children’s knowledge for negative emotions (see Table 21). The more parents punished their children’s expression of negative emotions, the more display rule knowledge that children had for negative emotions. Additionally, the interaction between child gender and parents’ punishing reactions was significant. For boys, the more parents respond to boys’ negative emotions by punishing them, the more display rule knowledge boys have for negative emotions (see Figure 2). For girls, the more parents punish girls’ negative emotions, the less display rule knowledge girls have for negative emotions.
Table 21

Regression Model with the Interaction Between Parental Punishment and Child Gender

Predicting Children’s Knowledge for Negative Emotions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental punitive</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.49**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child gender</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>.89**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent punitive * child gender</td>
<td>-1.55</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>-.97**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 = .14^*$  

$^1p < .10, ^*p < .05, ^{**}p < .01$

Figure 2

Interaction between parents’ punitive reactions and child gender predicting children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions
The relationships among parents’ encouraging, $F(3, 68) = .45, p > .05$, $R^2 = .02, \beta = .39$; distressing reactions, $F(3, 68) = .25, p > .05$, $R^2 = .01, \beta = -.16$; and parents’ minimizing reactions, $F(3, 68) = .49, p > .05$, $R^2 = .02, \beta = -.30$, and children’s display rule knowledge for negative emotions were not moderated by child gender.

To test if gender moderated the relation between parents’ expressiveness and children’s display rule knowledge, interaction terms were first computed from the product of gender and parents’ positive emotion expressiveness and parents’ negative emotion expressiveness. Using simultaneous regression analysis, parent positive expressiveness, parent negative emotion expressiveness, child gender and the interaction terms were entered simultaneously into the first step of the regression equation. Two models were tested: knowledge for positive emotions and knowledge for negative emotions.

For display rule knowledge for positive emotions, neither interactions of gender with positive emotion expressiveness or negative emotion expressiveness was significant, $F (5, 70) = .83, p > .05$, $R^2 = .06, \beta s = -.01$ & .27. For display rule knowledge for negative emotions, neither interactions of gender and positive emotion expressiveness or negative emotion expressiveness was significant, $F (5, 70) = .42, p > .05$, $R^2 = .03, \beta s = -.52$ & -.40. Therefore, child gender did not moderate the relationships between parents’ self-report positive or negative emotion expressiveness and children’s knowledge for display rules, which is contrary to the study’s hypotheses.
Aim 5: Children’s Display Rule Knowledge and Actual Behaviors During Jar Estimation Task

Because children expressed more positive affect during the competition than during the baseline, I was unable to explore the relationship between children’s actual modulation of affect with a peer and their display rule vignette responses. Children’s positive affect intensity during the task was positively correlated with their gift-receiving behavior, $r = .45, p < .05$; the more children expressed positive affect during the task, the more they were observed opening the gift immediately. Children’s gift-receiving behaviors were not correlated with children’s positive emotion vignette responses, $r_s = -.19, .18, -.10, ps > .05$.

Overall Summary of Findings

A summary of the findings for parents’ beliefs about emotions predicting parents’ reactions to children’s emotions, and parents’ emotion expressiveness is presented in Table 22. A summary of the findings for parents’ beliefs and self-reported behaviors predicting children’s peer outcomes is presented in Table 23.

Table 22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Beliefs (PBACE Questionnaire)</th>
<th>Parent Variables Predicted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Emotions are Dangerous</td>
<td>predicted more parental teach/control of children’s positive emotions (PRCPS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Emotions are Good</td>
<td>predicted more parental encouragement of children’s negative emotions (CCNES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Emotions are Good</td>
<td>predicted more parental positive emotion expressiveness (SEFQ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental teaching of emotion</td>
<td>predicted more parental positive emotion expressiveness (SEFQ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children learn on their own</td>
<td>predicted more parental negative emotion expressiveness (SEFQ)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23

*Summary of Child Variables Predicted by Parents’ Beliefs and Behaviors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Variable</th>
<th>Child Variable(s) Predicted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent Beliefs (PBACE)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotions are dangerous</td>
<td>Coping with Peer Stressors (COPE) predicted more humor coping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotions are good</td>
<td>predicted more acceptance coping and less active coping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotions are dangerous</td>
<td>predicted less support-seeking coping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children learn on their own</td>
<td>predicted more humor and avoidance coping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ Reactions (PRCPS)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Teach-Control</td>
<td>predicted more avoidance coping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ Reactions (CCNES)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Distress</td>
<td>predicted less humor coping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotion Expressiveness (SEFQ)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotion expressiveness</td>
<td>predicted less active and more humor coping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent Beliefs (PBACE)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotions are good</td>
<td>Display Rule Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>predicted less self-protective reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ Reactions (PRCPS)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach/Control</td>
<td>predicted less positive emotion knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predicted more positive emotion</td>
<td>knowledge for boys and less for girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ Reactions (CCNES)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimization</td>
<td>predicted more self-protective reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punishment</td>
<td>predicted more negative emotion knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge for boys and less for girls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

I first review the overall findings for each specific aim and then link these findings with past and future research. I will then note the strengths and limitations of the study. Lastly, I discuss directions for future research.

The Relationship Between Parents’ Beliefs and Their Emotion-Related Behaviors

The overall goal of the current study was to explore how parents’ positive emotion socialization beliefs and behaviors relate to children’s coping with peer stressors and children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning. The emotion socialization model (Cervantes & Seo, 2005; Dunsmore et al., 2006; Eisenberg et al., 1998; Halberstadt et al., 2006) suggests that parents’ emotion-related behaviors may be infused by parents’ beliefs about children’s emotions. As part of the first aim, some support was garnered for this model. Parents’ beliefs about children’s emotions predicted parents’ self-reported reactions, as well as their emotion expressiveness as discussed below.

Parents’ belief that positive emotions are good was positively related to their self-reported positive emotion expressiveness in the family. Parents who value happiness, pride, excitement, and love appear more likely to express these positive emotions in the family, perhaps to cultivate these positive emotions in their children (Fredrickson, 1998). However, parents’ belief about the value of positive emotions was not related to parents’ encouraging reactions to children’s display of positive emotions.

Parents’ belief that positive emotions are dangerous was positively related to parents’ teach/control reactions to children’s positive emotions. Parents who believe that experiencing and expressing positive emotions is dangerous report also trying to teach their children socially appropriate ways to express or not express those positive emotions.
A qualitative study on parents’ beliefs about emotions in the family revealed that expressing too much positive emotions in front of others was thought to negatively influence relationships and therefore, for at least some parents, the expression of pride or other positive emotions is seen as requiring limits (Duff et al., 2005). Most research has focused on the control of negative emotions (e.g., Jones et al., 2002), but the current findings suggest that at least some parents believe that positive emotions may also need to be controlled in certain situations. This has implications for parental teaching or modeling of positive and negative emotions. Although positive emotions may promote a variety of beneficial outcomes for children, as evidenced by Fredrickson’s (e.g., 2001; 2002) studies with adults, parents who believe that emotions are dangerous may teach their children how to control their expression of positive emotions. This control of emotions may particularly important in the context of peer relations, which will be discussed later.

With that being said, I predicted that parents who believe that positive emotions are dangerous would also react with discomfort or reprimand to their children’s displays of positive emotions; however, those effects did not emerge. Instead, it might be that parents who find positive emotions dangerous also regulate their negative responses to their children’s perceived inappropriate behaviors. Further, reprimanding children may lead to more displays of affect so these parents may choose to ignore their children’s displays of emotion as the best way to extinguish children’s expression of those positive emotions. Unfortunately the PRCPS does not include a minimization scale that would parallel the one for children’s negative emotions in the CCNES.
Parents’ beliefs about children’s experience and expression of negative emotions may also be associated with parents’ self-reported emotion-related behaviors. Parents’ beliefs about the goodness and danger of negative emotions were hypothesized to predict parents’ self-reported reactions to children’s negative emotions and parental negative emotion expressiveness. The hypothesis that parents’ belief that negative emotions are good would predict parents’ encouragement of children’s negative emotions was supported. The more parents believed that negative emotions are good, the more parents reported encouraging their children’s experience and expression of negative emotions. These parents value the experience and expression of anger and sadness and are likely to encourage children to explore and express their feelings. This supports Eisenberg’s (1998) emotion socialization model that parents’ beliefs may infuse parents’ behaviors.

Parents’ belief that negative emotions are dangerous was not positively related to parents’ non-supportive reactions, including punishment, distress and minimization, contrary to hypotheses. The PBACE focuses on parents’ general beliefs about children’s expression of primarily anger and sadness, whereas CCNES focuses on parents’ reactions to a multitude of negative emotions (specifically, fear, anxiety, embarrassment, anger and distress) in a multitude of contexts. Parents’ beliefs that anger and sadness are dangerous for children may not map onto parents’ reactions of how they would cope with a child who is afraid, worried or embarrassed. Additionally, it may be that parents use different behavioral pathways to express their beliefs. For example, parents who believe that negative emotions are dangerous may express that to their children by punishing or by ignoring their children’s displays emotions, and these are very different kinds of socialization responses.
Another important dimension of parents’ beliefs about emotion is parental guidance. Some parents may believe that it is the parent’s job to teach children about the experience and expression of emotion; in contrast others believe that children should learn on their own. These beliefs may lead to different parenting behaviors. Parents’ belief that parents should teach children about emotions was positively associated with parents’ positive emotion expressiveness in the family, as hypothesized. Parents who guide children’s emotions may recognize the importance of the expression of shared positive affect and its influence on children’s willingness to accept their parents’ message. Modeling emotions, via emotion expressiveness, may be one pathway through which parents can teach children about when and how to express emotions (Dunsmore & Halberstadt, 1997; Liable & Thompson, 2000). Taken together with the earlier findings that parents who value positive emotions also express more positive emotions in the family, these findings underscore the importance of parents’ valuing happiness and guiding children’s emotional experiences to cultivate positive emotions in children (Dunsmore & Halberstadt, 1997; Fredrickson, 1998).

Some parents may believe that children should learn about emotions on their own. Parents’ belief that children should learn about emotions on their own was positively associated with parents’ negative emotion expressiveness in the family, as hypothesized. This finding parallels other research demonstrating that parents who dismiss children’s experience of emotions also express negative emotions in the family (Hakim-Larson, Parker, Lee, Goodwin & Voelker, 2006). Parents who believe that children should be able to learn how to deal with negative emotions may not provide direction or guidance on how to respond to or deal with those emotions. When their high expectations are not
met, these parents may experience and express greater negative emotions (Dix, 1991).
Alternatively, parents who are high in negative expressiveness may focus on parent-centered, rather than child-centered, goals or they may be too stressed to teach children about their emotions (e.g., Coplan, Hastings, Lagace-Seguin, & Moulton, 2002). These possible pathways may need to be explored in future research in order to better assess the directionality of the relationship.

In summary, parents’ beliefs about the value of emotion, as well as the importance of guiding emotion, were related to parent’ reactions to children’s emotions and expressiveness in the family. Although these links were all demonstrated via self-report, these findings are promising and warrant further research combining observational measures with self-reports to explore the mechanisms underlying parental socialization of positive emotions. Additionally, these findings may provide evidence for the Eisenberg et al. (1998) emotion socialization model, specifically how parents’ beliefs influence parents’ reactions to and expression of both positive and negative emotions.

Children’s Coping With Peer Stressors

Given the importance of forming friendships in middle childhood and adolescence, children have to develop skills to cope with everyday peer stressors that may arise (Parker & Asher, 1987). To capture the complete picture of children’s coping with everyday peer stress, I first discuss the variety of peer stressors that children face daily. I then discuss the coping strategies that emerged, via factor analysis, and how these differ from past research, as well as which strategies children reported using to cope. I then explain the gender difference findings.
Children’s reports of peer stressors were most likely to come from the category of argument/fights with same-sex peers. The majority of children reported that stressful events included being teased, excluded, victims of gossip or lies, or on the receiving end of broken plans, replicating past research (e.g., Causey & Dubow, 1994; Repetti et al., 1999; Sandstrom, 2004; Spirito et al., 1990). A small number of children reported that they had arguments/fights with or about other-sex peers, in contrast to a large number of adolescents in the Washburn-Ormachea et al. (2004) study. The children in the current study were just entering middle school and romantic relationships may not be of interest to 6th graders to cause much stress.

Children’s coping strategies fell into five main categories: Support-seeking; humor; active; acceptance and avoidance. These categories are somewhat different than those found in past studies with teens (e.g., Phelps & Jarvis, 1994; Washburn-Ormachea et al. 2004). Children’s strategies for coping may still be getting organized and the sixth grade children may be developing styles that are not yet internally consistent (Losoya et al., 1998). The main differences in coping strategies were found within the support-seeking and humor coping strategies. Children in the current study reported using support-seeking (e.g., seeking advice or emotional support) as a coherent factor when dealing when peer stressors. This coping strategy did not emerge as a factor in the Washburn-Ormachea et al. (2004) study, rather; these items were split among the active and emotion-focused strategies. The difference may lie in that middle school-aged children seek support from others more often than adolescents and are encouraged to seek out support as a specific strategy, whereas older children, who are encouraged to develop greater independence, may consider support seeking as part of other strategies (Losoya et

Additionally, humor emerged as its own factor in the current study, whereas in past studies, humor was a part of the acceptance coping strategy (e.g., Phelps & Jarvis, 1994; Washburn-Ormachea et al., 2004). Humor is a coping strategy children use that has not received much empirical attention. One exception is work by Fuhr (2002) who found that 12-year old children used humor when tackling uncertain or stressful situation. My findings indicated that 11-year old children used humor for coping as well. The continued study of humor is important because high levels of humor coping with adults are associated with positive views of the self and life experiences, higher levels of sociability, cheerfulness and optimism (Kuiper, Martin, & Olinger, 1993; Martin, Puhl-Doris, Larson, Gray & Weir, 2003; Martin, 1996). However, it remains unknown if humor coping is adaptive or maladaptive for children to use in the context of everyday peer stress.

Children in the current study reported using acceptance and active coping the most to cope with peer stressors, similar to the adolescents in Washburn-Ormachea et al. (2004). Taking action and problem solving, as part of active coping, have been conceptualized as effective and adaptive coping tools (e.g., Ayers, et al., 1996; Lengua & Long, 2000). Acceptance has not received as much empirical attention and it is difficult to determine if this strategy is adaptive or maladaptive in the face of peer stress. The use of this coping strategy may depend on the type of stressful situation. There are some stressful peer problems that may not have solutions. For example, if a child is not invited to a birthday party, this exclusion may be stressful but attempting to problem solve or seek support may not resolve the situation. In this case, realizing that nothing can be done
and accepting the fact that it happened may be the best way to cope. Additionally, the duration of the stressful problem may influence children’s acceptance coping. Perhaps in the face of peer stressors that are long lasting, children may decide to accept the fact that it has happened because past attempts to problem solve or seek support had failed. Future research should include a question about the length of the stressful event to gain a clear picture regarding how long the children have been experiencing the stressful event. These findings may have implications for counselors or clinicians working with children who endure daily stress. Interventions may be developed to teach children effective ways of dealing with peer stressors, such as being teased or ostracized, which appear to be common in middle school, given the children’s reports in the current study.

Children’s perceptions of importance of and control over the stressful event may also impact how they coped (Thurber & Weisz, 1997). Children who perceived the stressful event as important were more likely to use active and support-seeking strategies than children who did not perceive the stressful event as important. These children were also less likely to use humor as a coping strategy. This last finding highlights that laughing or making fun of the situation is an effective strategy for coping with everyday stress when the situation is not as important to children.

Gender differences in children’s coping also existed. As in Washburn-Ormachea et al., (2004), girls were more likely than boys to report that the situation mattered to them. The current study additionally found that girls were less likely to report that they had control over the situation, which is in contrast to past studies with adolescents. Additionally, girls reported using more support-seeking and less humor as coping strategies compared to boys, illustrating how girls and boys may deal with peer problems
in different ways. Most coping research has found that girls are more likely to use support-seeking to deal with a variety of different stressors (interpersonal and academic) than boys (e.g. Preuss & Dubow, 2004). Additionally, boys are more likely to use humor in the face of uncertain, stressful situations than girls (Fuhr, 2002). These findings highlight how parents and teachers alike should be aware of these emerging gender differences in children’s coping, especially when providing support in dealing with peer stressors. It is not yet clear which strategies are the most successful, however, it is probably sound practice to continue teaching multiple strategies to all children.

Overall, children in middle school appear to have a repertoire of coping strategies to deal with everyday peer stressors, although boys and girls may utilize different coping strategies. An important caveat is that differences in children’s reports of coping strategies across studies may not be due to age only, but may also be due to a variety of sampling differences. Future research should include more than one age group to compare coping strategies across age groups.

Children’s Display Rule Knowledge and Reasoning

Display rule knowledge is a marker for socio-emotional competence (e.g., Halberstadt et al., 2001; Jones et al., 1998; McDowell & Parke, 2000; 2005), yet few researchers have explored children’s knowledge and goals for modulating positive emotions, such as pride or excitement (see McDowell & Parke, 2000 for an exception). Children may need to regulate their expressions of pride, excitement and happiness in front of others, in addition to modulating their negative emotions. Indeed, children who cannot regulate positive emotions are likely to be rated as less socially competent by peers and teachers (McDowell & Parke, 2000; Rydell et al., 2003). In the current study,
children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions was demonstrated via their hypothetical vignette responses.

Children endorsed prosocial goals more than self-protective goals in response to the hypothetical vignettes. This sample of children was more empathetic to others’ feelings and may be less likely to be worried about protecting themselves from trouble or teasing by friends for receiving an undesirable gift. Children’s prosocial reasoning has been linked with their empathy and role-taking behaviors (Garner, 1996).

The current study was the one of the few studies to observe children’s masking of positive emotions during a task with their peers, which is in contrast to the multitude of studies that have explored children’s masking of negative emotions during the disappointment paradigms (e.g., Cole, 1986; Garner & Power, 1996; McDowell & Parke, 2005). Unfortunately, children did not appear to modulate their positive emotions as expected during the peer competition. Rather, children expressed more positive affect during the competition than during their baseline, which is contrary to hypotheses. It may be that the competition did not tap into children’s regulation of positive emotion, although that seems unlikely in that 14% of the children did not open the gift in front of the losing peer, even when prompted by the experimenter. Perhaps children did not perceive winning this type of math competition as a big deal to them or their partners, thereby reducing the need to mask their feelings. However, children’s mean scores in terms of their positive affect intensity fell in the middle of a 5-point scale, suggesting moderate positive affect. Another possibility is that children’s intensity of positive affect may have been built up by one another during the competition. Dyadic coding systems and analyses would better capture these behaviors (e.g., sharing smiles or laughs with one
another). Children’s masking of display rules for pride may not be as clear to observe as children’s masking disappointment when presented with an undesirable gift or anger when playing with a cheating partner. In this case, there were also two people for which to display appropriate emotions – the experimenter who was giving a nice gift, and the peer who had lost the competition. Further research is warranted to explore the complexity of children’s modulation of positive affect. This is especially important given that children in the current study demonstrated display rule knowledge for positive emotions, in addition to negative emotions via hypothetical vignettes.

Parents’ beliefs and behaviors (specifically expressiveness and reactions to emotions) may influence children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning and these relationships may also vary by child gender. This will be discussed in following section after children’s coping.

Parents’ Beliefs and Emotion-Related Behaviors Predicted Children’s Coping

My second aim was to explore the links between parents’ beliefs and behaviors and children’s coping. Parents’ beliefs about emotion, which are relatively new to the field of emotion socialization, appear linked to important child outcomes. For example, parents’ beliefs about the value and danger, as well as controllability of emotions, have been related to children’s coping with the terrorist attacks, as well as their interpretations of parent-child and peer conflict (Dunsmore et al., 2006; Halberstadt et al., 2006) The current study extended these findings in that some parents’ beliefs predicted some parents’ self-reported expressivity and reactions, as well as children’s everyday coping.

A direct relationship between parent education and children’s coping has been found in different coping contexts, such as community violence (e.g., Kliwer, et al.,
and in this study, parent education was associated with children’s support-seeking and humor coping. These findings emphasize the importance of including parent and family level variables when exploring how children construct their understanding of the peer world.

Parents’ beliefs about negative emotions in the family play an important role in how children deal with their daily stress. Parents’ beliefs that negative emotions are good and are dangerous predicted different coping strategies. Parents’ belief that negative emotions are good was related to children’s use of less active and more acceptance coping strategies. I predicted that discussing negative emotions in the safe environment of the family would encourage children to use their anger from the stressor to seek out new ways of dealing with the problem (e.g. Oatley & Johnson-Laird, 1996). Instead, children of parents who believe that negative emotions are good were more likely to accept the fact that the stressful event took place. It is possible that these parents believe that there are times when it is okay to feel sad and in the event that there is nothing that can be done about the stressful event, feeling sad and accepting the fact that it happened may be the most effective solution. Knowing more details about children’s stressors would be useful in future research exploring parents’ roles in children’s coping.

Additionally, parents’ belief that negative emotions are dangerous was related to children’s support-seeking coping. The more parents believe that anger or sadness are dangerous to feel or show, the less their children seek support from their parents. These children may avoid seeking out parents if they believe that their feelings should not be expressed or discussed as found in relation to coping with an intense event (Halberstadt, et al., 2006).
Parents’ belief that positive emotions are good was not related to any of the children’s coping strategies, despite hypotheses to the contrary. One possible reason is that this parent belief had a high mean score, which may have reduced its variability. Another reason is that beliefs about positive emotions may not be enough to influence children’s effective coping strategies. Parents may also need to model how to utilize positive emotions to cope effectively. And in combination with this, parent may need to model strategy use in different stressful contexts. For example, parent coaching, modeling of coping and family context all contributed to children’s coping with community violence (Kliewer et al., 2006). Parental emotion and coping socialization may work hand in hand with one another to influence children’s coping. Future studies should incorporate both models of coping and emotion socialization when exploring children’s coping with daily stressors.

Despite the lack of findings with parents’ beliefs that positive emotions are good, parents’ belief that positive emotions are dangerous was associated with children’s use of humor as a coping strategy. There are two possible explanations for this interesting relationship. The first is that in an environment where happiness, pride and excitement are perceived as dangerous, humor may be the only safe way to express emotion. The second is that parents who see their children using jokes and laughter to cope rather than directly tackling the issue may fear that their children are not dealing with those situations in the best way. The more children use humor, the more these parents believe that positive emotions are dangerous and can get out of control.

Parents’ beliefs about the value of negative emotions and danger of both positive and negative emotions have a direct effect on children’s coping. This makes it important
for parents to be aware of the influence of their value beliefs, let alone their behaviors, on children. This is further demonstrated with the findings on parents’ beliefs about guiding children’s emotion and children’s coping.

Parents’ belief that parents should teach children about emotions was not related to children’s coping, although this may have been due to the high number of parents who strongly endorsed teaching their children about emotion, which may have reduced the amount of variability for this parent belief. On the other hand, parents’ belief that children learn on their own was related to children’s avoidance and humor coping strategies. The more parents believed that children should learn on their own, the more children made jokes about or avoided dealing with situation. These children may not have the experiences to learn about emotions in themselves because their parents do not pay attention or teach them. This may lead to children’s inability to cope with their feelings and instead, utilize non-effective coping strategies, such as avoidance. Parents’ with parent-centered goals are less likely to foster a positive relationship with their children or have interest in meeting their children’s needs (Coplan, et al., 2002). This lack of attention and warmth can lead to a variety of negative outcomes, such as externalizing problems (e.g., Denham et al., 1997).

Parental reactions to children’s positive and negative emotions, an important mechanism in Eisenberg et al.’s (1998) emotion socialization model, may also play a role in children’s coping with everyday stress. In the current study, parents’ self-reported reactions to children’s positive and negative emotions were related to children’s use of humor and avoidant coping. However, when parent education was taken into account, the relationships among teach/control and reprimand reactions to children’s positive
emotions and children’s humor coping were no longer significant. Parents’ education level played a role in how parent model coping behavior to their children, contributing more to children’s coping behaviors than parents’ reactions to children’s emotions. However, parents’ distress reactions to negative emotions (but no other reactions to children’s negative emotions) remained a significant predictor of children’s humor coping, above and beyond parent education. Children who experience parents’ feelings of distress or discomfort may reduce the amount of humor they use to deal with the situation to avoid making their parents uncomfortable. Additionally, for children’s avoidant coping, parents’ teaching/controlling of positive emotions predicted children’s avoidant coping, above and beyond parent education. The more parents’ attempted to control children’s expression of positive emotions, the more children avoided dealing with the stressful situation. If there is too much control over children’s expression of positive emotions, children cannot learn how to handle situations and therefore, may avoid the situation altogether. These children may not have the skills to harness their positive emotions to feel better (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Although hypothesized, parents’ encouragement of positive emotions was not related to children’s use of coping strategies. This may be due to the fact that the PRCPS focused more on socially appropriate responses, rather than the cultivation of positive emotions in children’s lives. Furthermore, parents’ reactions to children’s negative emotions may not be a strong contributor to children’s coping. This is surprising given that parents’ reactions to children’s emotions are important mechanisms within the emotion socialization model (Eisenberg et al., 1998).
Parents’ self-reported emotion expressiveness, another important emotion socialization mechanism, was also explored in relation to children’s coping. Parents’ self-reported negative emotion expressiveness, but not parents’ positive emotion expressiveness, was related to children’s less active coping. From a broaden and build perspective (Fredrickson, 1998), children in a negative affective climate may narrow, rather than broaden, their thought-action repertoires. Negative emotions are likely to stifle problem-solving and creativity and these children may not have the skills to actively problem solve or come up with a strategy to deal with the stressful situation (Isen, 1999).

As mentioned, no significant relations were found among parents’ self-reported positive expressiveness and children’s coping. These findings fit with other studies in which negative, but not positive emotionality, predicted children’s appraisals and coping. In particular, negative emotionality was related to children’s use of avoidant coping (Lengua & Long, 2002). However, I expected that parents who are more expressive of positive emotions in the family would provide children with the experience of positive emotions to broaden their cognitive abilities, as argued by the broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 1998). Perhaps for parental socialization of positive emotion, direct models of observation are needed, rather than self-report measures.

In summary, parents’ beliefs and self-reported behaviors were related to children’s use of different coping strategies. Although these findings were intriguing and warrant further exploration, parental beliefs and behaviors predicted only a small amount of variance, suggesting that there are other possible predictors, in addition to child gender and parent education, that may influence children’s coping strategies. For example,
parents’ modeling of their own coping behavior may contribute to children’s coping skills. Parents’ cultivation of positive emotions, via mechanisms such as mutual positive affect, may also play a role in children’s coping as with other child outcomes (e.g., Kochanska, 1997).

Parents’ Beliefs and Their Emotion-Related Behaviors Predicted Children’s Display Rule Knowledge and Reasoning

The next goal of the current study was to explore the influence of parents’ beliefs and their self-reported behaviors on children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning. No study to date has explored how parents’ reactions to children’s negative or positive emotions relate to children’s knowledge for display rules. This is particularly important to investigate because parent-child interactions in the home may teach children how to appropriately express themselves when in the presence of others. These skills can then be transferred into the peer world to foster relationships with peers and teachers.

Parents’ beliefs about the value and danger of emotion were expected to predict children’s knowledge for display rules. Parents’ beliefs about the value of emotions did not predict children’s display rule knowledge for positive or negative emotions. However, parents’ belief that positive emotions are good was associated with children’s less utilization of self-protective reasons for regulating their inner feelings. Children of parents who value positive emotions may be less likely to regulate emotion for protect themselves, but more likely to regulate emotions to avoid hurting another’s feelings. However, parents’ beliefs did not predict children’s prosocial reasoning, as hypothesized. The majority of children endorsed prosocial goals for modulating emotions, thus
restricting the range of children’s responses, which may have contributed to the lack of findings.

Parental control over children’s emotions may contribute to children’s display rule knowledge and use (McDowell & Parke, 2000). In the current study, parents’ reactions to children’s emotions were significantly associated with children’s knowledge and reasoning and some of these relationships were moderated by child gender. For example, the more parents controlled positive emotions, the more boys demonstrated display rule knowledge for positive emotions whereas, the more parents controlled girls’ positive emotions, the less girls demonstrated display rule knowledge for positive emotions. Also, the more parents punished boys’ expressions of negative emotion, the more boys demonstrated display rule knowledge for negative emotions whereas, the more parents punished girls’ negative emotions, the less girls demonstrated display rule knowledge for negative emotions. Boys may learn through punishment that they must regulate their negative emotions at certain times. On the other hand, punishment may not be an effective teaching tool for girls to show them how to appropriately display their negative emotions, as demonstrated in other research that examined the influence of mothers’ emotion expression on children’s memory for crafts (Dunsmore, Halberstadt,& Robinson, 2006). Boys whose mothers criticized their performance had better memory for the crafts than boys whose mothers did not criticize them. Additionally, mothers’ pleasant structuring of the task and allowance of autonomy positively contributed to their daughters’, but not sons’, positive social behavior (Denham et al., 1991).

Parental encouragement of children’s positive emotions was associated with children’s display rule knowledge for positive emotions. The more parents encourage
children’s positive emotions, the less children have display rule knowledge for positive emotions. For example, a parent who encourages his/her child to express pride and happiness at winning a race, even in the presence of the losing runners, will probably have a child who will not understand the appropriate times to mask those positive feelings. This encouragement may not allow children to develop the necessary skills to regulate their emotions and maintain positive peer relations.

Parents’ minimizing reactions to children’s negative emotions also significantly predicted children’s display rules reasoning. Parental minimization of children’s negative emotions predicted children’s endorsement of self-protective reasoning. The more parents minimized children’s displays of negative emotions, the more children regulated their negative feelings for self-protective reasons. These parents may dismiss children’s feelings of sadness or anger by telling children to move on or get over it (Gottman, 1997). Alternatively, these parents may also tell children that others may laugh or tease them for expressing their negative feelings, prompting children to regulate their emotions to protect themselves from others.

Overall, it seems that these controlling and punishing reactions may be more effective for boys’ development of display rule knowledge than girls. This has implications for parents’ emotion-related socialization behaviors and its impact on children’s social competence. Girls are socialized early on in life about what is socially appropriate to express and may not need explicit teaching on when and how to regulate their positive and negative emotions. On the other hand, boys may need more guidance in the form of punishment or control in order for the boys to accurately receive the message about the importance of emotion regulation.
Although hypothesized, parents’ self-reported emotion expressiveness did not predict children’s display rule knowledge or goals and these relationships were not moderated by gender. This is contrary to past research in which parents’ negative expressiveness predicted both kindergarten and elementary school-aged children’s self-protective and prosocial reasoning (Jones et al., 1998). Parents’ reactions to children’s emotions may play a bigger role in middle school-aged children’s knowledge than parents’ expression of emotion in the home.

**Mediation | Model of Parents’ Beliefs and Children’s Peer Outcomes**

The third aim of the current study was to explore whether or not parents’ self-reported emotion-related behaviors mediated the relationship between parents’ beliefs and children’s coping and display rule knowledge. These analyses were not conducted because the necessary steps for mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986) were not met.

**Conclusion**

The findings of the current study suggest that parents’ emotion-related socialization beliefs and behaviors for positive emotions are related to children’s coping with everyday stress, and children’s display rule knowledge and reasoning, although these relations were not as strong as anticipated. Most of the findings point toward what happens when parents attempt to stifle or extinguish children’s displays of positive emotions. These children may not develop effective strategies for coping with everyday peer stressors. Positive emotions also play a role in children’s lives, as evidenced by their display rule knowledge for positive emotions and their use of humor when coping with everyday peer stress. The above findings do not downplay the importance of parents’ socialization of negative emotions because these self-reported parent beliefs and
behaviors also influenced children’s coping strategies and use of display rules. What is important to realize is that parents’ and children’s emotional experiences in the home may spill over into children’s emotional experiences with peers.

The current study’s findings contribute to the Eisenberg et al. (1998) model of emotion socialization by demonstrating that parents’ beliefs about children emotions may be associated with some of parents’ emotion-related behaviors (although these findings are based on self-report). Additionally, parents’ socialization of positive emotions may now have a place within the model, which primarily features studies on negative emotions. Positive emotions also need to be cultivated in the family, not only to broaden children’s skills in their every day life, but to also be taught the importance of regulating those emotions when needed.

*Strengths of Study*

There are many strengths associated with this study. The first is the population of interest: children in middle school, which is an age period that does not receive much attention in the emotion socialization literature. There are a variety of emotion and cognitive abilities that emerge during this period, such as perspective taking, problem solving, and emotion expression, understanding and knowledge (Eccles, 1999; Saarni, 1999). These developmental competencies provide children with the necessary tools to utilize a broad array of coping strategies. This makes these children an interesting population to explore.

The second strength is that this study provides evidence for parental socialization of positive emotions, via multiple measures of parental socialization (beliefs, reactions and expressiveness). Most emotion socialization studies focus on negative emotion rather
than positive emotion (see Eisenberg et al., 1998). But there is a need to think about how parents teach their children about positive emotions and this study is a first step toward doing so. One important finding was that parents who believe that positive emotions are good are likely to express positive emotions in the family. This climate may contribute to children’s understanding of emotions, in particular, their understanding of when to modulate emotion in front of others.

This relates to the third strength of the study in that children do have knowledge for regulating their positive emotions, as uncovered via children’s their self-reports. Most studies have only examined children’s understanding of display rule knowledge and reasoning for negative emotions. We are now learning that it is important for children to modulate positive emotions when interacting with peers. The next steps are to continue developing a sound paradigm to capture children’s modulation of positive affect and to link these behaviors, via self-report and observation, with children’s social competence.

Limitations of Study

There were some limitations to the study that warrant further discussion. Only 17 fathers participated in the study. This is a frequent issue in the emotion socialization literature and many researchers utilize various strategies for including fathers in research. It remains important to include both mothers’ and fathers’ perspectives because they may respond differently to children’s emotions (e.g., Chaplin, Cole, & Zahn-Waxler, 2005; Parke & McDowell, 1998).

Another limitation of the current study may lie within the relatively new self-report measure of parents’ reactions to children’s emotions (PRCPS, Ladouceur et al., 2002). The PRCPS scenarios appeared to tap into socially appropriate expression of
emotion, rather than the encouragement of positive emotions in every day life. The scenarios are ones in which everyone should tone down their excitement or happiness because that is what is socially appropriate to do. For example, everyone should not giggle or laugh during a wedding ceremony or curiously point at someone who is in a wheelchair. Despite the fact that it is important to teach children about positive emotions, these scenarios do not tap into the current study’s desired construct of the positive aspects of positive emotions. Future studies should attempt to create a better measure to capture how parents cultivate positive emotions in children’s lives. Additionally, the PRCPS, as well as the CCNES may not be age-appropriate. Parents’ reactions to children’s emotion may be more appropriate emotion-related socialization behaviors for younger children, rather than older, pre-adolescent children.

Another limitation is that the parents’ emotion-related behaviors were based solely on self-report. Future studies will benefit from including observations of parents’ reactions to children’s emotions, as well as parents’ emotion expressiveness. This study was the first step to explore parents’ reactions to children’s expression of positive emotions. The next step would be to observe interactions in which parents would respond to children’s displays of excitement, happiness, and pride.

Lastly, a limitation of the COPE was that the reliability of the factors was low; however, these factors were based on few items due to using the shortened version of the COPE. This may have caused the internal reliability to be low. Despite this, many interesting findings emerged among parents’ self-reported beliefs and behaviors and children’s coping.
Future Research

Although the current findings provided some intriguing links between parents’ positive emotion-related behaviors and children’s coping and display rule knowledge, more research needs to be conducted to further explore these findings. Parents’ beliefs about children’s emotions may be expressed via a variety of different emotion socialization pathways, in addition to parental reactions and emotion expressiveness. Additional parent emotion-related socialization behaviors, such as situation selection and niche-picking, should also be explored (Fredrickson, 1998; Parke & McDowell, 1998). These emotion-related behaviors may work together with parental reactions or expressiveness in the family to teach children about positive emotions. Related to this, there is a need to conduct an in-depth examination of distinct positive emotions rather than just the frequently used positive emotions, such as happiness and pride. For example, higher positive emotion granularity has been linked with planning ahead when coping and thinking through a stressful problem before acting (Tugade et al., 2004).

Future research in the area of parent cultivation of positive emotion should include children’s perceptions of the experience, in addition to parents. Children’s interpretations of a key aspect of their parents’ socialization of emotion, such as parental reactions to the children’s emotions, were important contributors to children’s emotional competence with peers (Denham, 1997). Future research should attempt to explore the bi-directional nature of the parent-child relationship and how children play a role in their own learning about emotions.

More research needs to be conducted to understand the complex nature of children’s modulation of positive emotions. Although we know that children are more
likely to mask their negative emotions in front of peers, more so than in front of parents (Shipman, Zeman & Stegall, 2001; Shipman, Zeman, Nesin, & Fitzgerald, 2003), we do not know what children would do with their positive emotions in the presence of peers, parents or even siblings. It may be that it is important to modulate one’s positive emotions in front of peers due to the consequences of expressing too much pride or excitement in the face of those who do not share the same feelings (e.g., von Salisch, 2001). In the peer world, children may damage their friendships by expressing too much positive emotion. The impact of pride may also vary depending on the degree to which the children have a collectivistic versus individualistic perspective, and the degree to which the peers are related (good friends may enjoy the prize as well). In parent or sibling relationships, children may not expect as many consequences for expressing their emotions or they worry less about damaging those relationships because they are family. Therefore, it is also important to explore how this relates to children’s social competence. How children’s knowledge for positive emotions relates to their social competence, via teacher reports or observation, could not be answered by the current study. However, coding children’s affective social competence during a challenging game with a peer may be a useful paradigm. Children’s knowledge for masking their emotions may be related to their sending or receiving of emotion skills when interacting with their peers.

Whether or not children consistently use the same coping strategies to deal with everyday stressors is another important issue to explore based on the findings from the current study. Conducting a longitudinal study of children’s everyday stressors and coping may capture the myriad of stressors that children experience, as well as how they cope with these stressors over time. Additionally, there is limited research on children’s
coping flexibility and future research should focus on whether or not it is adaptive for children to use different coping strategies in different stressful contexts.

In all, the current study has revealed many intriguing relations between children’s family and peer experiences. These relationships have sparked the beginning of an exciting program of research.
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relationship between psychological understanding and positive social behaviors.

*Social Development, 12, 198-221.*


Parents’ and children’s implicit and explicit judgments about emotions. Submitted to *Social Cognition*.


differences in uses of humor and their relation to psychological well-being:


Appendix A

*Parents’ Beliefs about Children’s Emotions*

**Instructions:** These statements express different beliefs about children’s emotional development and about parents’ roles in helping children with their emotions. Please read each statement and write in the number that shows how much you agree with the statement. Put this response in the column titled “Your answer”. Because children’s abilities develop over time, please pick a child age (somewhere between the ages of 4 and 10) that you are familiar with, and respond to these statements for children of that age.

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<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
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<th>3 slightly disagree</th>
<th>4 slightly agree</th>
<th>5 agree</th>
<th>6 somewhat agree</th>
<th>7 strongly agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>It's good for the family when children share their positive emotions.</td>
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<td>It is important for children to be able to show when they are happy.</td>
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<td>It is important for children to express their happiness when they feel it.</td>
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<td>It is important for children to develop lots of ways to be happy.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Joy is an important emotion to feel.</td>
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<td>Having lots of joy is very important for a child.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>When children show pride in what they have done, it is a good thing.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>It is important for children to share their positive emotions with others.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>It is important for children to feel pride in their accomplishments.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>It is important for children to be proud of a job well done.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>It is okay when children feel angry, and it is okay when they don't.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Showing emotions isn't a good thing or a bad thing, it's just part of being human.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Feeling sad sometimes is just a part of life.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Feeling angry sometimes is just a part of life.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Showing sadness is neither bad nor good, it is just part of being human.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Being sad isn't &quot;good&quot; or &quot;bad&quot; -- it is just a part of life.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Being angry isn't &quot;good&quot; or &quot;bad&quot; -- it just is a part of life.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>It is okay when children feel happy, and it is okay when they don't.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Feeling all emotions is a part of life, like breathing.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>It is okay when children feel sad, and it is okay when they don't.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Getting mad can help children do things they need to, like sticking with a task that’s hard, or standing up for themselves</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>It is good for children to feel sad at times.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>It is important for children to show others when they feel upset.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Children’s anger can be a relief to them, like a storm that clears the air.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>It is useful for children to feel angry sometimes.</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Sometimes it is good for a child to sit down and have a good cry.</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>It is good for children to let their anger out.</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>When children show anger, they are letting you know that something is important to them.</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Feeling sad helps children to know what is important to them.</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>The experience of anger can be a useful motivation for action.</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Being angry can motivate children to change or fix something in their lives.</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Expressing anger is a good way for a child to let his/her desires and opinions be known.</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Feeling negative emotions is sort of a dead end street, and children should do whatever they can to avoid going down it.</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Showing anger is not a good idea for children.</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>When children get angry they create more problems for themselves.</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Feeling sad is just not good for children.</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>When children are too loving others take advantage of them.</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>Children who are too loving can get walked all over.</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>When children get angry, it can only lead to problems.</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>When children are too happy, they can get out of control.</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>It is important for children to avoid feeling sad whenever possible.</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>When children express anger, someone in the family ends up having to deal with the consequences.</td>
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<td>43.</td>
<td>Anger in children can be emotionally dangerous.</td>
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<td>44.</td>
<td>Children who feel emotions strongly are likely to face a lot of trouble in life.</td>
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## Appendix A (contd.) PBACE- Guidance Beliefs

| 1. | When children become sad or upset, parents can let them manage their feelings on their own. |
| 2. | How and when to show positive emotions is something that children have to figure out for themselves. |
| 3. | Children can figure out how to express sad feelings on their own. |
| 4. | It's usually best to let a child work through their negative feelings on their own. |
| 5. | Children can learn to manage their emotions without help from parents. |
| 6. | When children are angry, it is best to just let them work it through on their own. |
| 7. | Children can figure out how to express their feelings on their own. |
| 8. | Children generally learn how to deal with their angry feelings, without parents telling them how. |
| 9. | It's the parent's job to teach children how to handle negative feelings. |
| 10. | It's the parent's job to help children know when and how to express their positive emotions. |
| 11. | It's important for parents to help a child who is feeling sad. |
| 12. | It is important for parents to teach children when and how to show pride in themselves. |
| 13. | It's a parent's job to teach children about happiness. |
| 14. | When children are feeling angry, parents can help them work through those feelings. |
| 15. | An important role for parents is to help their children understand the children's feelings. |
| 16. | It is a parent's job to teach their children how to handle their emotions. |
| 17. | Parents should spend time helping children develop their own positive feelings. |
| 18. | It's important for parents to teach children the best ways to express their feelings. |
| 19. | It's a parent's job to teach children how to deal with distress and other upsetting feelings. |
Appendix B

SELF-EXPRESSIVENESS IN THE FAMILY QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a questionnaire about the degree of expressiveness people show in their families. To answer the questionnaire, try to think of how frequently you express yourself during each of the following situations with family members. Using the scale shown below, write in the number that best indicates how frequently you express yourself in that situation when it occurs. Thus, if you never or rarely express those feelings, write down a 1, 2, or 3 in the space beside the statement. If you express those feelings with some or moderate frequency, write down a 4, 5, or 6. And if you express those feelings very frequently, write down a 7, 8 or 9.

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<td>not at all frequently</td>
<td>somewhat frequently</td>
<td>very frequently</td>
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1. Showing forgiveness to someone who broke a favorite possession. ______
2. Thanking family members for something they have done. ______
3. Exclaiming over a beautiful day. ______
4. Showing contempt for another's actions. ______
5. Expressing dissatisfaction with someone else's behavior. ______
6. Praising someone for good work. ______
7. Expressing anger at someone else's carelessness. ______
8. Sulking over unfair treatment by a family member. ______
9. Blaming one another for family troubles. ______
10. Crying after an unpleasant disagreement. ______
11. Putting down other people's interests. ______
12. Showing dislike for someone. ______
13. Seeking approval for an action. ______
14. Expressing embarrassment over stupid mistakes. ______
15. Going to pieces when tension builds up. ______
16. Expressing exhilaration after an unexpected triumph. ______
17. Expressing excitement over one's future plans. ______
18. Demonstrating admiration. ______
Please rate how frequently you express yourself in these situations with your family. Use the scale shown below, and write in the number that fits best for you beside the item.

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19. Expressing sorrow when a pet dies. ______
20. Expressing disappointment over something that didn’t work out. ______
21. Telling someone how nice they look. ______
22. Expressing sympathy for someone’s troubles. ______
23. Expressing deep affection or love for someone. ______
24. Quarreling with a family member. ______
25. Crying when a loved one goes away. ______
26. Spontaneously hugging a family member. ______
27. Expressing momentary anger over a trivial irritation. ______
28. Expressing concern for the success of other family members. ______
29. Apologizing for being late. ______
30. Offering to do somebody a favor. ______
31. Snuggling up to a family member. ______
32. Showing how upset you are after a bad day. ______
33. Trying to cheer up someone who is sad. ______
34. Telling family members how hurt you are. ______
35. Telling family members how happy you are. ______
36. Threatening someone. ______
37. Criticizing someone for being late. ______
38. Expressing gratitude for a favor. ______
39. Surprising someone with a little gift or favor. ______
40. Saying “I’m sorry” when one realizes one was wrong. ______

Thank you for your time!
Appendix C

Parent Attitude/Behavior Questionnaire (CCNES)

Instructions: In the following items, please indicate on a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely) the likelihood that you would respond in the ways listed for each item. Please read each item carefully and respond as honestly and sincerely as you can. For each response, please circle a number from 1-7.

Response Scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very Unlikely Somewhat Likely Very Likely

1. If my child becomes angry because he/she is sick or hurt and can't go to his/her friend's birthday party, I would:
   a. send my child to his/her room to cool off 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. get angry at my child 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. help my child think about ways that he/she can still be with friends (e.g., invite some friends over after the party) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. tell my child not to make a big deal out of missing the party 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. encourage my child to express his/her feelings of anger and frustration 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. soothe my child and do something fun with him/her to make him/her feel better about missing the party 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. If my child falls off his/her bike and breaks it, and then gets upset and cries, I would:
   a. remain calm and not let myself get anxious 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. comfort my child and try to get him/her to forget about the accident 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. tell my child that he/she is over-reacting 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. help my child figure out how to get the bike fixed 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. tell my child it's ok to cry 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. tell my child to stop crying or he/she won't be allowed to ride his/her bike anytime soon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. If my child loses some prized possession and reacts with tears, I would:
   a. get upset with him/her for being so careless and then crying about it 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. tell my child that he/she is over-reacting 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. help my child think of places he/she hasn't looked yet 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. distract my child by talking about happy things 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. tell him/her it's ok to cry when you feel unhappy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. tell him/her that's what happens when you're not careful 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. If my child is afraid of injections and becomes quite shaky and teary while waiting for his/her turn to get a shot, I would:
   a. tell him/her to shape up or he/she won't be allowed to do something he/she likes to do (e.g., watch TV).  
   b. encourage my child to talk about his/her fears  
   c. tell my child not to make big deal of the shot  
   d. tell him/her not to embarrass us by crying  
   e. comfort him/her before and after the shot  
   f. talk to my child about ways to make it hurt less (such as relaxing so it won't hurt or taking deep breaths).

5. If my child is going over to spend the afternoon at a friend's house and becomes nervous and upset because I can't stay there with him/her, I would:
   a. distract my child by talking about all the fun he/she will have with his/her friend  
   b. help my child think of things that he/she could do so that being at the friend's house without me wasn't scary (e.g., take a favorite book or toy with him/her)  
   c. tell my child to quit over-reacting and being a baby  
   d. tell the child that if he/she doesn't stop that he/she won't be allowed to go out anymore  
   e. feel upset and uncomfortable because of my child's reactions  
   f. encourage my child to talk about his/her nervous feelings

6. If my child is participating in some group activity with his/her friends and proceeds to make a mistake and then looks embarrassed and on the verge of tears, I would:
   a. comfort my child and try to make him/her feel better  
   b. tell my child that he/she is over-reacting  
   c. feel uncomfortable and embarrassed myself  
   d. tell my child to straighten up or we'll go home right away  
   e. encourage my child to talk about his/her feelings of embarrassment  
   f. tell my child that I'll help him/her practice so that he/she can do better next time
7. If my child is about to appear in a recital or sports activity and becomes visibly nervous about people watching him/her, I would:
   a. help my child think of things that he/she could do to get ready for his/her turn (e.g., to do some warm-ups and not to look at the audience) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. suggest that my child think about something relaxing so that his/her nervousness will go away 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. remain calm and not get nervous myself 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. tell my child that he/she is being a baby about it 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. tell my child that if he/she doesn't calm down, we'll have to leave and go home right away 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. encourage my child to talk about his/her nervous feelings 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. If my child receives an undesirable birthday gift from a friend and looks obviously disappointed, even annoyed, after opening it in the presence of the friend, I would:
   a. encourage my child to express his/her disappointed feelings 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. tell my child that the present can be exchanged for something the child wants 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. **NOT** be annoyed with my child for being rude 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. tell my child that he/she is over-reacting 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. scold my child for being insensitive to the friend's feelings 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. try to get my child to feel better by doing something fun 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. If my child is panicky and can't go to sleep after watching a scary TV show, I would:
   a. encourage my child to talk about what scared him/her 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. get upset with him/her for being silly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. tell my child that he/she is over-reacting 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. help my child think of something to do so that he/she can get to sleep (e.g., take a toy to bed, leave the lights on) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. tell him/her to go to bed or he/she won't be allowed to watch any more TV 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. do something fun with my child to help him/her forget about what scared him/her 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. If my child is at a park and appears on the verge of tears because the other children are mean to him/her and won't let him/her play with them, I would:
   a. NOT get upset myself 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. tell my child that if he/she starts crying then we’ll have to go home right away 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. tell my child it's ok to cry when he/she feels bad 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. comfort my child and try to get him/her to think about something happy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. help my child think of something else to do 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. tell my child that he/she will feel better soon

11. If my child is playing with other children and one of them calls him/her names, and my child then begins to tremble and become tearful, I would:
   a. tell my child not to make a big deal out of it 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. feel upset myself 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. tell my child to behave or we'll have to go home right away 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. help my child think of constructive things to do when other children tease him/her (e.g., find other things to do) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. comfort him/her and play a game to take his/her mind off the upsetting event 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. encourage him/her to talk about how it hurts to be teased 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. If my child is shy and scared around strangers and consistently becomes teary and wants to stay in his/her bedroom whenever family friends come to visit, I would:
   a. help my child think of things to do that would make meeting my friends less scary (e.g., to take a favorite toy with him/her when meeting my friends) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. tell my child that it is OK to feel nervous 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. try to make my child happy by talking about the fun things we can do with our friends 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. feel upset and uncomfortable because of my child's reactions 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. tell my child that he/she must stay in the living room and visit with our friends 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   f. tell my child that he/she is being a baby 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Appendix D

Parental Reactions Questionnaire (PRCPs)

A series of scenarios involving you and your child are presented to you. Please indicate on a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely) the likelihood that you would respond in the ways listed for each response (under each item). Please read each item carefully and respond as honestly and sincerely as you can. Also, please provide an answer to all of the responses below.

Response Scale:  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

1. If we are in a restaurant to celebrate a birthday with our family and my child jumps out of his/her chair and shouts “Happy Birthday!”, I would:

   a) be slightly embarrassed by my child’s behavior.
      
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

   b) smile showing him/her that I am happy to see him/her having fun.
      
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

   c) tell my child, in a firm voice, “Sit down!”.
      
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

   d) tell my child not to shout so loudly because he/she will disturb the other clients.
      
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

2. If my child wins a toy at a birthday party and shows it proudly to the other children who have not received one, I would:

   a) be ashamed by my child’s inconsiderate behavior.
      
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

   b) explain to my child that it is great that he won a gift but not to flaunt it in front of the other children because this will make them feel bad about not winning.
      
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

   c) let my child express his joy of receiving a toy.
      
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
d) tell my child to put the toy away.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

3. If we are sitting on the patio at our friends’ house and, while playing with other children, my child is running, jumping and screaming, I would:

a) tell my child to calm down and suggest another game that he/she could play.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

b) tell my child, in a firm voice, to stop jumping and running around immediately.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

c) let my child play and have fun.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

d) be slightly embarrassed by my child’s behavior.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

4. If we are in a store and my child curiously touches some of the objects, I would:

a) feel annoyed with my child’s behavior.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

b) let my child explore.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

c) firmly tell my child to stop touching the objects.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

d) explain to my child that he/she must not touch the objects because he/she might break them and then I would have to pay for them.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
5. If we have just purchased a puppy for my child and he/she plays with the puppy by chasing it around and making it bark, I would:

a) feel irritated by my child’s behavior.
   
   
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b) smile at my child showing him/her that I am pleased he/she is enjoying the new puppy.

   
   
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c) firmly tell my child to stop chasing the puppy.

   
   
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d) explain to my child that if he/she wants to play with the puppy, he/she can do so outside.

   
   
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6. If we are at a wedding and my child is giggling with a cousin seated next to him/her, I would:

a) smile and let him/her have fun with his/her cousin.

   
   
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b) frown at my child and firmly tell him/her to be quiet.

   
   
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c) be embarrassed by my child’s behavior.

   
   
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d) tell my child that his giggling is disturbing the other people and would redirect his/her attention to some part of the ongoing ceremony.

   
   
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7. If my child wins in a sports competition and after being congratulated by everyone, he/she continues to jump around gleefully and tell people about his/her victory, I would:

   a) smile approvingly and offer more congratulation.
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   b) frown at the display and tell my child that it’s enough.
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   c) explain to my child that part of winning is keeping some of the joy and pride for one’s self.
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   d) say nothing but feel uncomfortable.
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. If my child has a friend over for dinner and during dinner, my child and his/her friend start teasing each other and laughing loudly, I would:

   a) let my child have fun with his/her friend.
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   b) firmly tell my child, “That’s enough!”.
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   c) explain to my child that if he/she wants to play, he/she can do so after dinner.
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   d) feel annoyed with my child’s behavior.
      Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. If my child runs into the house, after school, and exuberantly recounts, in great
detail, the games he/she played with some of the other children at school while I
was preparing dinner, I would:

a) promptly tell my child that I am busy preparing dinner and that he/she can tell me
about this later.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

b) feel irritated by child’s exuberant behavior.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

c) listen and ask questions encouraging my child to elaborate further.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

d) explain to my child that I am interested in what he/she has to say but would be
better able to listen to him/her during dinner time.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

10. If we are going on a family car-trip and, during the two-hour drive, my child and
his/her friend are singing and laughing loudly, I would:

a) feel annoyed by my child’s behavior.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

b) allow my child to have fun with his/her friend.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

c) firmly tell my child to stop it right now.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely

d) suggest a quiet game for them to play.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
11. If we are in a restaurant and my child is staring at a person in a wheelchair seated at the next table, I would:

a) let my child look.

Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

b) gently give my child a nudge and tell him/her to stop that.

Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

c) be slightly embarrassed by my child’s rudeness.

Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

d) explain to my child that it is not polite to stare at people.

Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. If we are having co-workers over dinner and after dinner while we are chatting around the dinner table, my child and his/her friend decide to put on a comedy show (performing silly skits), I would:

a) tell my child that we are busy talking and suggest that they play in another room.

Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

b) let my child put on the show.

Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

c) feel slightly embarrassed by my child’s behavior.

Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

d) suggest to my child that, beforehand, he/she ask our friends if they wish to see the performance.

Very unlikely Somewhat likely Very likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Appendix E

Demographics Sheet for Parents

We are very interested in conducting our research with a representative population. Please let us know how diverse our population is by filling out the information below.

Age: _______
Sex: _______
Education:
High School begun _____ High School completed _____ College begun _____ College completed _____
____ Graduate School begun _____ Graduate School completed _____

How would you describe your ethnic background? ___________________________
(e.g., African American, Hispanic, Native American, White)

What is your marital status? Single Married Divorced Separated Widow Co-Habit/Living Together

How many children do you have? ____________ Please list their sex and age below:

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What, if any, religion are you affiliated with?
What region of the country are you from?
What kind of area are you from? Rural Urban Suburban Other (Please Specify)

What is your current job? __________________________________________
What is your spouse/partner’s job? ___________________________________

Interested in participating in other research? If so, please sign below, and we will let you know when other research studies are available. Then you can choose whether you would like to participate in those studies at that time. Thank you very much!

Name ___________________________ Phone Number __________________
E-mail ________________________
Appendix F

COPE

We are interested in how people respond when they confront difficult or stressful events in their lives. There are lots of ways to try to deal with stress. We are trying to find out how people deal with different problems and stresses with their friends. Think about a situation with your friends that has bothered you during the last 2 months. Please describe the situation.

Now we would like you to respond to each of the following items using the response choices listed just below. Please think about the experience you just told me about when you answer these questions. Please answer every item. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. Indicate what YOU did when YOU experienced the stressful event.

1 = I didn’t do this at all
2 = I did this a little bit
3 = I did this a medium amount
4 = I did this a lot

1. I turned to school or other activities to take my mind off things. ___
2. I concentrated my efforts on doing something about the situation I was in. ___
3. I said to myself "this isn't real.". ___
4. I got emotional support from others. ___
5. I gave up trying to deal with it. ___
6. I took action to try to make the situation better. ___
7. I refused to believe that it had happened. ___
8. I said things to let my unpleasant feelings escape. ___
9. I got help and advice from other people. ___
10. I tried to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive. ___
11. I reduced the amount of effort I put into solving the problem. ___
12. I tried to come up with a strategy about what to do. ___
13. I got comfort and understanding from someone. ___
14. I gave up the attempt to cope. ___
15. I looked for something good in what is happening. ___
16. I made jokes about it. ___
17. I did something to think about it less, such as going to movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, or shopping. ___
18. I accepted the reality of the fact that it happened. ___
19. I expressed my negative feelings. ___
20. I tried to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs. ___
21. I tried to get advice or help from other people about what to do. ___
22. I learned to live with it. ___
23. I thought hard about what steps to take. ___
24. I pretended that it didn’t really happen. ___
25. I prayed or meditated. ___
26. I made fun of the situation. ___
Appendix G
Display Rules

1) It is Mike’s birthday. His family is having a party for him. Mike’s aunt brings him a great looking gift to unwrap. Mike hopes it is a new video game. Everyone watches Mike unwrap the gift. Guess what it is? It’s a pair of white socks.

2) Today Jennifer is playing checkers with a friend at Jennifer’s house. Jennifer has won the first few games today and she is very happy. But her friend is getting frustrated and tired of losing. When this happened yesterday, her friend quit and went home early. But Jennifer doesn’t want her friend to stop playing checkers and leave.

3) Laura’s team has just lost an important game. The coach tells the kids on Laura’s team that they have to go and shake hands with all the kids on the winning team, the team that just beat them.

4) Deanna is really excited because today is Monday and this is the day that the teacher chooses new kids for special jobs in the classroom. Deanna wants to be the office monitor because it’s really a fun job. But Deanna knows that her best friend wants to be chosen for office monitor too. When the teacher announces who will be the office monitor for the next week, Deanna hears her name called.

5) James and his friend were in a race at school. Everybody’s parents were there to watch. James’s friend won the race and James came in last. Everyone clapped for James’s friend, but no one clapped for him.

6) Today all the students in Aneisha’s math class are getting their tests back. Aneisha and her friend spent a lot of evenings together studying really hard for this test because they knew it would be difficult. When the teacher hands back the tests, Aneisha gets an A but her friend gets a C.

For each of the vignettes, the possible choices for “How do you think _______ feels about….” were: Happy, Excited, Proud, Sad, Mad, Surprised, Nothing/Neutral, Disappointed, Disgusted, Embarrassed, Scared, Relieved.

For each of the vignettes the possible choices for “How do you think _______ face would look” were: Nothing/Neutral, Happy, Sad, Disgusted, and Surprised. Why would the child look that way.